The Indestructible Will: A Critical Examination of Arthur Schopenhauer's Theory of Athanasia

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Arthur Schopenhauer, a nineteenth-century German philosopher, advocated a unique theory of immortality (athanasia). The present study attempts to indicate that, in spite of the ingeniousness and consolatory appeal of his theory, it is ultimately – according to an orthodox interpretation which wholly identifies the Will with the so-called "thing-in-itself" – untenable and erroneous. In arriving at the aforementioned conclusion, the study attempts to argue that the two pillars upon which Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia is based are flawed, viz., that the world cannot be entirely mind-dependent and that the Will cannot be considered an explication of the elusive Kantian "thing-in-itself". The study explores, among other topics, Schopenhauer's arguments for radical idealism, the compatibility of Schopenhauer's evolutionary views with that of his radical idealism, the status of the mind within his philosophy, the notion of the Will as a concept and as a product of intellectual intuition, as well as the Will being susceptible to the influences of time, space and causality.

The study has been divided into two primary sections: in the first part, a detailed overview of Schopenhauer's philosophy is presented; this is necessary in so far as Schopenhauer is a systematic thinker, hence, in order for one to fully comprehend his theory of athanasia, it is necessary for one to first acquaint oneself with his two most significant and fundamental notions, viz., his radical idealism and his claim that the Will is the "thing-in-itself". Once these matters have been presented and discussed, the study turns in earnest to a consideration of Schopenhauer's theory of immortality. In the second part of the study, the two fundamental pillars of Schopenhauer's philosophy are subjected to a thorough critique in order to ultimately illustrate the untenability of his theory of athanasia. As part of this enterprise, the study includes an appendix which attempts to illustrate that the Will as "thing-in-itself" is not insusceptible to the law of causation, thereby undermining one of Schopenhauer's claims for its indestructibility.

ABSTRAK

Arthur Schopenhauer, ‘n negentiende-eeuse Duitse filosoof, het ‘n unieke teorie van onsterflikheid (athanasia) voorgestaan. Hierdie studie poog om aan te toon dat, ten spyte van die vindingrykheid en die vertroostende appél van die teorie, dit uiteindelik onhoudbaar en onjuis is. Ter begronding van die bogenoemde konklusie, poog die studie om aan te toon dat die twee pilare waarop Schopenhauer sy teorie van athanasia basseer, naamlik dat die wêreld nie volledig afhanklik van die bewussyn kan wees nie, en dat die Wil nie beskou kan word as ‘n veruiterliking van die ontwykende Kantiaanse “ding-in-sigelf” nie, gebreke vertoon. Benewens ander onderwerpe, verken die studie Schopenhauer se argumente vir ‘n radikale idealisme, die versoenbaarheid van Schopenhauer se opvatting van evolusie en sy radikale idealisme, die status van die bewussyn in sy filosofie, die idee van die Wil as ‘n konsep en as ‘n produk van intellektuele intuïsie, asook dat die Wil onderhewig is aan die invloede van tyd, ruimte en oorsaaklkiheid.

Hierdie studie is verdeel in twee primêre afdelings: in die eerste deel word ‘n gedetaileerde oorsig aangebied van Schopenhauer se filosofie; wat noodsaaklik is omdat Schopenhauer ‘n sistematiese denker is, en dus vereis ‘n volledige begrip van sy teorie van athanasia, dat ‘n mens eers op hoogte gestel moet word van sy twee mees belangrike en fundamentele opvattings, naamlik sy radikale idealisme, en sy stelling dat die Wil die “ding-in-sigself” is. Teen die agtergrond hiervan word Schopenhauer se teorie van onsterflikheid in alle erns oorweeg. In die tweede deel van die studie word die twee fundamentele pilare van Schopenhauer se denke onderwerp aan ‘n deeglike kritiek, om uiteindelik die onhoudbaarheid van sy teorie van athanasia aan te toon. As deel van hierdie onderneming sluit die studie ‘n aanhangsel in wat poog om te illustreer dat die Wil as “ding-in-sigself” nie onafhanklik is van die wet van oorsaaklikheid nie, waardeur een van die gronde wat Schopenhauer aanbied vir sy aanspraak dat die Wil onvernietigbaar is, ondermyn word.

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PREFACE

As a prelude to my dissertation I wish to give a synopsis of the contents to be found herein, as well as to offer a personal note on the primary subject-matter of the exposition. To begin with, there must necessarily be a psychological reason for one favouring a particular philosopher and paradigm over another, for our interests are, perhaps much to our personal mortification, perpetually self-interested. My fascination with Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia began when I experienced the traumatic loss of someone extremely dear to me. The event triggered an existential crisis wherein I found myself questioning the meaning of life, why innocent creatures suffer unnecessarily and what happens to us after we die. To my great delight, I found all these topics sufficiently explored and, as I initially and naively thought, resolved in Schopenhauer's work. Indeed, I maintain that these topics are of universal interest in so far as we are all mortal and subject to the vicissitudes of life; they can consequently remain uninteresting to none of us. I admit that upon my initial contact with the Schopenhauerian philosophy I became possessed with what I can only describe as a "religious fanaticism"; Schopenhauer's teaching became an indisputable creed I fervently believed in, akin to the devotion which a pious man shows for his religion – Schopenhauer was my messiah and his principal work, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, was my bible! However, I ultimately became an apostate, for I gradually came to realise that, in spite of its beauty and consolatory power, the Schopenhauerian philosophy is riddled with numerous inconsistencies, and I endeavoured to make these as perspicuous as possible in order for me to determine the ultimate veracity thereof; for like every genuine lover of wisdom I seek the truth above all else and I cannot be consoled by the false and the spurious. This work is the culmination of that enquiry which occupied my mind for so many years. In a sense then, I wrote it primarily for my own elucidation and edification; and this I believe is the best way in which to write, for one is then not attempting to impress others with their erudition but merely writing in order to understand for one's own purposes. I hope that this will be evident to all who take the time to earnestly consider my work. I would also like to add that the process of writing a critical examination on the philosophy I admire so much has been incredibly therapeutic, for in creating (and criticizing!) I have been able to heal myself of a particular psychological wound.

However, I do not wish to give the erroneous impression that my critical examination renders the Schopenhauerian philosophy worthless; for in spite of my numerous criticisms I maintain that there is still a great deal in Schopenhauer's philosophy which encourages earnest thinking and offers genuine consolation. Indeed, even though we live in a largely secular and materialistic age, one in which metaphysical theories are often neglected and excoriated, science has still not succeeded in vanquishing death; hence a philosophy which is both atheistic and yet offers the hope of immortality is, in my estimation, potentially capable of offering an alternative view scarcely considered; for most individuals who contemplate the inevitability of death vacillate between two extremes, i.e. they regard death as either the eternal continuation of our individual characters in the form of an immaterial "substance" or as an absolute oblivion. The Schopenhauerian philosophy, even if erroneous in its particular details, offers a third possibility which I believe is worthy of our earnest consideration.

Let me now turn to a synopsis of the contents to be found in my exposition. In writing my dissertation I wanted, as far as possible, to trace the intellectual development of Schopenhauer's theory of immortality, for like a masterful architect Schopenhauer constructs the edifice of his theory upon particular and well-thought out foundations; I was therefore compelled to commence the first half of my dissertation with an overview of Schopenhauer's philosophy, in order for one to comprehend the theory in its entirety before I began excoriating it in earnest. Unfortunately, it was impossible to present Schopenhauer's philosophy without critically engaging with it, and consequently one will find a certain amount of critical content in the first part of the exposition. I do not, however, believe that this vitiates the work, but it seems to me to contribute to a fuller understanding of Schopenhauer's views in so far as I am constantly engaging with his notions and trying to make sense of them. In connection with this procedure, I have presented the outline of Schopenhauer's philosophy in accordance with the way in which he expounds it in his principal work: I begin with his notion of radical idealism, I then turn to his attempt to positively characterise the so-called "thing-in-itself", which, once discussed, inevitably leads me to discussions on suffering, suicide, death and Schopenhauer's theory of immortality. I have followed this general layout in both primary sections of the dissertation.

In the second section of the exposition I have amassed a collection of arguments which I take to refute Schopenhauer's two pillars upon which he constructs his theory of

athanasia. One will, of course, find some of these notions anticipated in the first part of my discussion, for, as mentioned, I was not able to present Schopenhauer's views without critically engaging with them. The two fundamental notions upon which Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia is based are (i) radical idealism and (ii) the identification of the Will with the Kantian "thing-in-itself". My first goal in this second primary section is to refute Schopenhauer's radical idealism, which I attempt to accomplish by way of a critical consideration of Schopenhauer's arguments for radical idealism, the status of the mind within Schopenhauer's philosophy, the compatibility of evolutionary views with the radical idealist position, and considerations to illustrate that time, space and causality must in fact be mind-independent. My second intention is to illustrate that the Will cannot be considered the solution to the way the world is in itself; in short, and among other things, I argue that the Will is located within time and space and is furthermore subject to the causal principle. This last topic is treated at length by way of a consideration of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine, which I have attached as an appendix to the dissertation. As this discussion is a self-contained study on a particular aspect of Schopenhauer's philosophy, I wanted neither to vitiate it nor my dissertation by attempting to incorporate it into the main section of my exposition; however, given its significance to my study I could not justifiably omit it, and hence I have rather incorporated it as an addendum. As will be seen, the ultimate rejection of these two fundamental pillars necessarily renders Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia untenable. I ought to add that in arriving at this conclusion I have made extensive use, not solely of Schopenhauer's primary texts, but also of the vast secondary literature dealing with various aspects of Schopenhauer's thought; I am greatly indebted to many of these sources and their authors (even when I have argued in opposition to them) for facilitating my comprehension of certain, and often complicated, aspects of Schopenhauer's philosophy. In particular, I have found the works of Christopher Janaway, David E. Cartwright, Julian Young and Robert J. Wicks exceptionally beneficial in this regard.

A recurrent theme throughout my dissertation, which I hope readers will notice, is my insistence upon the finitude of the human brain and its ability to entirely comprehend all types of phenomena: I incessantly emphasise that we as humans are limited in our capacity to comprehend the universe in its totality. By this, I should not be misconstrued as portending that there are phenomena for which no causes exist, but rather that there

are some causes we cannot fathom owing to the finitude of our minds. There is a possibility that athanasia is one such unfathomable issue; and I consequently conclude my dissertation with the notion that the ultimate state of the phenomenon is a mystery. I indicate that depending on the interpretation we take of the thing-in-itself within Schopenhauer's system, i.e. if we consider ultimate reality to be pluralistic, it leaves open the possibility that something totally ineffable survives the demise of one's physical form and remains immortal. But, following Schopenhauer, I preclude the possibility of athanasia entailing any continuation of consciousness or personal identity. However, for two primary reasons I have not attempted to positively characterise what such an immortality might consist of. Firstly, such a characterisation would necessarily require me to surpass the mind's limits, thus descending into mere dogmatic opinion; secondly, I wanted my study to remain true to its initial aim, viz., to critically engage with Schopenhauer's thoughts and attempt to determine the ultimate veracity thereof. I reiterate that although I ultimately find the theory erroneous there is still much that one can acquire by way of an engagement with Schopenhauer's notions.

In the course of my discussion I engage with material which is little, if ever, considered in the secondary English literature on Schopenhauer, such as the metaphysical Will's consciousness and purposiveness in forming objects in the phenomenal world, in what sense Schopenhauer ought to be understood in declaring it "better not to exist", a novel interpretation of Schopenhauer's theory of salvation and Schopenhauer's unique evolutionary views. I have endeavoured to incorporate these interesting topics within the primary discussion of my exposition and I believe that I have succeeded in so doing; furthermore, I maintain that these discussions contribute immensely to the study as a whole. Finally, it is my sincere hope that my critical examination of Schopenhauer's theory of immortality will contribute to the growing English literature on Schopenhauer, and that it will encourage other Schopenhauerian scholars to further explore points I have raised in my dissertation. For those readers who do not have an interest in the Schopenhauerian philosophy, but who happen for one reason or another to read my exposition nonetheless, I hope that they can discover herein one or two consoling notions concerning the inevitability of death.

J. Bloomberg

1. Introduction

Throughout the annals of human existence there have been perpetual hopes that, by some means or other, the evils of old age and death will ultimately be vanquished. In the bygone era of superstitious beliefs and religious fanaticism, humankind's hopes for immortality rested squarely upon biblical dogma (cf. John 3:16); yet the advent of science has rendered such beliefs untenable in the minds of many – for one simply cannot be consoled by notions which one does not accept as veracious. The development of the scientific method, contrary to popular belief, however, has not extirpated humankind's hope of immortal life, it has merely substituted the metaphysical for the physical, i.e. where once the general belief was that the soul would continue to exist *in secula seculorum*,[1] so it is hoped by many nowadays that science will eventually unlock the secret of extending human existence indefinitely, much as in a bygone era alchemists maintained that consumption of the fabled *lapis philosophorum*[2] would do the same; however the ambition remains a reverie as elusive now as it was with the alchemists centuries ago. In light of the fact that science has hitherto not discovered the modern equivalent of the *lapis philosophorum*, and has simultaneously vitiated the old consolations of religious dogma by revealing them to be inconsistent and erroneous, what possibility is there of consolation regarding the inevitability of death for a modern individual? Ought one to cling thoughtlessly to the deflated religious notions or accept that a physical immortality is, for now at least, an impossibility and that one ought consequently to live by the "bestial" (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969b: 464) maxim: "*edite, bibite, post mortem nulla voluptas*"?[3] I maintain that the Schopenhauerian philosophy, albeit flawed, offers a third alternative

[1] "Unto the age of ages"; expressing the notion of eternity.

[2] "The Philosopher's Stone"; a substance purported to be an elixir of immortal life and to turn base metals into gold.

[3] "Eat and drink, after death there is no more rejoicing" (Payne's translation, cf. page 464). In his lengthy discussion on death and immortality in the second volume of his *magnum opus* Schopenhauer (1969b: 464) observes that most Western people tend to vacillate "[…] between the conception of death as absolute annihilation and the assumption that we are, so to speak with skin and hair, immortal". Schopenhauer (quoted in Cartwright, 2005: 37) considers both views to be equally problematic and ultimately erroneous.

worthy of earnest consideration. For although Schopenhauer was an open and unapologetic atheist (Edwards, 2009: 173), rejecting much of the dogma of the Judaeo-Christian religion concerning immortality, he (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969b: 463-509) nonetheless constructed an elaborate metaphysical theory of athanasia, which in many respects is not at variance with modern scientific views.[4] In this sense, and despite the fact that I shall excoriate Schopenhauer's theory in great detail in my exposition, I maintain that many of his views are of great benefit and consolation to our modern civilisation, which has, as mentioned, largely lost its religious belief and has not yet discovered the means by which to extend human life indefinitely. Moreover, the possibility of immortality – whether one accepts it as veracious or not – must be of interest to all in so far as everyone is, as it were, condemned to death; "[n]ature", as Montaigne (1946a: 118) rightly states, "forces us to it":

> "'Go from this world,' she says, 'as you came into it. […] Your death is one of the parts of the order of the universe; it is a part of the life of the world […] Death is the condition of your creation, it is a portion of yourself; you fly from yourself. This existence of yours, which you have the enjoyment of, is equally divided between death and life. The day of your birth starts your steps towards dying as well as towards living.
>
> The first hour that gave us life shortened our life.
>
> From our birth we die, and our end hangs upon our beginning.'"

Given the ubiquity of the phenomenon of death I maintain that a philosophy such as Schopenhauer's which maintains a unique form of athanasia cannot be uninteresting and of no concern to all who live and breathe.[5] Hence, I consider my thesis vindicated

[4] For instance, V. J. McGill (1971: 21 and 26) considers Schopenhauer to be a precursor to both modern Darwinian evolutionary theory and "important movements in modern psychology".

[5] Furthermore, it is interesting to note that Socrates (quoted in Schopenhauer, 1969b: 463) defined philosophy as "θανάτου μελέτη" ("*thanatou melete"*), i.e. "preparation for death" (Payne's translation, cf. Schopenhauer, 1969b: 463). It seems to me that the notion of philosophy as a "preparation for death" is reiterated continuously throughout the Western philosophical tradition, most notably, in my estimation, in Plato's famous works *Apology, Crito* and *Phaedo*, Epicurus' *Letter to Menoeceus* and in one of the sections of Montaigne's (1946a: 103-123) famous work, *Essais*, entitled: "*That to Think as a Philosopher is to Learn to Die*".

in occupying itself with a critical examination of Schopenhauer's (cf. 1969b: 463-509) theory of athanasia.

However, in order to fully arrive at a conclusion regarding the veracity thereof, it is necessary to scrutinize Schopenhauer's (cf. 1969a: xii) system in its entirety. This is due to the fact that Schopenhauer is, as Kathleen M. Higgins (2003: 330) notes, "an emphatically systematic thinker. In claiming that his philosophy is an 'organic' whole, composed of elements that stand or fall together, Schopenhauer invites the reader who rejects a part of it to reject the theory *in toto*". In particular, a sound assessment of the Schopenhauerian doctrine of immortality requires a pedantic consideration of the two pillars upon which the theory is based, viz., Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3) radical idealism, i.e. the view that the world is entirely mind-dependent, and his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100) claim that the essence of the world is a metaphysical Will, impervious to the influences of time, space and causality. I maintain that by illustrating the untenability of radical idealism on Schopenhauer's terms on the one hand, and by proving that the Will cannot be the enigmatic *Ding-an-sich* on the other hand, Schopenhauer's theory of immortality necessarily founders. In essence, this is due to the fact that Schopenhauer (1969b:487-488, et al.) claims that, unlike the world of appearances, the metaphysical Will is impervious to the influences of time, space and causality; as such the Will as *Ding-an-sich* must necessarily be indestructible and consequently it is that which is immortal.

To that end, I have divided the exposition into two main sections: the first is intended as a preliminary discussion, structured in accordance with Schopenhauer's presentation of these themes in his principal work[6] – however, I fully acknowledge that some

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Consequently, I consider the theme of my exposition, viz., Schopenhauer's theory of immortality, to be a continuation of a noble tradition in Western philosophy, initiated all those centuries ago by Socrates.

[6] The exposition commences with a detailed discussion on "the world as appearance", in accordance with Schopenhauer's (cf. 1969a: 1) primary theme, viz., "the [appearance] subject to the principle of sufficient reason: the object of experience and of science", in the first book of *Die Welt*; I then turn to a consideration of "the world as Will", which accords with Schopenhauer's (cf. 1969a: 93) attempted positive identification of the elusive Kantian *Ding-an-sich* in the second book of his *magnum opus*. These two chapters form the foundation upon

unavoidable, albeit significant criticisms of Schopenhauer's thought are presented in the course of my discussion; this is unavoidable and necessary in so far as I could not merely present Schopenhauer's views without simultaneously engaging with them in a critical manner, for my intention herein is not merely to present an outline of Schopenhauer's views, but rather, to actively engage with them in order to arrive at a conclusion regarding their ultimate veracity – whereas the second main part is devoted entirely to a critical consideration of Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia in particular as presented and detailed in the first part. I shall commence the exposition with a discussion on Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3) radical idealism; this necessarily requires an introductory discussion on Kant's identification of the mind as an active entity, i.e. as contributing to the creation of the experienceable world. The presentation of Kant's views is significant in so far as in the course of my discussion I wish to contrast Schopenhauer's radical idealism with that of Kant's (partial) idealism as presented in the second (1787) edition of the *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*; ultimately, I wish to illustrate that Schopenhauer's radical idealism is susceptible to numerous criticisms

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which the entire dissertation is constructed. I have not accorded great consideration to the third book of *Die Welt*, viz., Schopenhauer's aesthetic theory, as it does not have much pertinence to the primary discussion, viz., death and immortality; however, it has been necessary to devote a portion of my discussion to a clarification of the role played by the Platonic Ideas within Schopenhauer's architectonic, as these mysterious entities play a crucial role in the way in which Schopenhauer (1969a: 127-130) believes the world of appearances presents itself to consciousness. I have also devoted a considerable portion of my discussion to Schopenhauer's (cf. 1969a: 309-310) pessimism, which can be found in the fourth book of *Die Welt*. I vindicate this inclusion for the sake of excoriation: were my intention merely to present and discuss Schopenhauer's views on death and athanasia, I may have been permitted to exclude such a discussion altogether; however, in order to undermine Schopenhauer's theory of immortality it was necessary to engage with his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 398-402) views on suicide, which naturally entail his pessimistic characterisation of life. Ultimately, I illustrate that for Schopenhauer (1969a: 400-402) solely one form of suicide, viz., intentional death by starvation, is avowable and, on his terms, commendable. This observation intimates a significant fact for the excoriation of Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia: ultimately it illustrates that the metaphysical Will is *not* impervious to alteration (an essential aspect for Schopenhauer's theory of immortality). This seemingly perplexing notion is discussed in great detail in the exposition, wherein it is made entirely perspicuous.

which Kant's partial idealism is not. I then turn to a consideration of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) attempted solution of the enigmatic nature of the way the world is in-itself. Now the word by which Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) characterises the essence of the world, viz., "Will", has generated some confusion and consequently there are Schopenhauerian scholars, such as Bryan Magee (1997: 144) and S. Jack Odell (2001: 54), who have erroneously ventured to supplant Schopenhauer's intentionally chosen term for the concepts of "force" or "energy". In order to fully comprehend why this is inadmissible, I turn to a detailed consideration of Schopenhauer's (1889b: 246) view of the way in which his metaphysics can be taken as completing the scientific *Weltanschauung*. Thereafter, I examine the way in which this enigmatical essence manifests itself in the world of appearances (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 146-147), generating a pessimistic view of existence. In the course of my discussion I indicate that Schopenhauer did not, contrary to popular belief, proscribe the begetting of children; instead I illustrate that he encouraged the production of children in so far as they hold out the hope of an utter, i.e. metaphysical, abrogation of the Will. This topic, viz., Schopenhauer's (cf. 1969a: 378-402) views on asceticism and suicide, naturally leads me to the primary section, i.e. a discussion of Schopenhauer's (1969b: 463-509) views on death and immortality. As mentioned, Schopenhauer's fascinating theory is necessarily dependent upon his (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 3-18) claims for radical idealism and his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100) theory of the Will being the *Ding-an-sich*. I vindicate the structure of my exposition by reiterating that due to the fact that Schopenhauer (1969a: xii) claims that his system is essentially the imparting of "a single thought"[7] wherein "every part supports the whole just as much as it is supported by the whole; a [connection] in which no part is first and no part is last, in which the whole gains in clearness from every part, and even the smallest part cannot be fully understood until the whole has been first understood"; it is therefore necessary to consider the philosophical system *in toto*.

My ultimate intention, however, is to persuasively illustrate the untenability of Schopenhauer's (1969b: 500) claim regarding the immortality of the metaphysical Will. Consequently, in the second part of the exposition in particular – but throughout the

[7] There is some controversy regarding precisely what Schopenhauer (1969a: xii) meant by his "single thought" (cf. Atwell, 1995: 18).

course of my discussion in general, as mentioned – I shall attempt to indicate that the metaphysical Will is in fact spatially and temporally situated and that it is subject to the causal principle. It is interesting to note that since the publication of his *magnum opus* in December 1818, Schopenhauer (1969a: 112-113) has been excoriated for claiming that the Will is atemporal (Cartwright, 2010: 388). However, to my knowledge, no one has yet – at least in the secondary English literature – attempted to illustrate that the Will is spatially bound or susceptible to the influence of causality. I have arrived at the view that the Will is actually capable of alteration by way of a consideration of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 378-398) soteriological doctrine. In short, the only way in which Schopenhauer's (1969a: 382) claim that the metaphysical Will dissolves at the moment of the ascetic's death can be comprehended is to construe the phenomenal ascetic practices as affecting what I have termed a "*transcendental change*" (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 403), whereby the metaphysical Will is caused to "contract". However, the possibility of this occurring necessarily entails the metaphysical Will being subject to the causal principle. It is hoped that these notions will be made persuasively perspicuous in the course of the discussion.

I shall also attempt to illustrate that Schopenhauer's (1969a:3) radical idealism is incompatible with a modern scientific view of the universe. In particular, I shall argue that Schopenhauer's (1974b: 152-154) evolutionary views are utterly at variance with his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 3) radical idealist claim and his (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273-274) view of consciousness as dependent upon the physical brain.[8] To my knowledge there is a lacuna in the secondary English literature regarding Schopenhauer's evolutionary views and their compatibility with his radical idealism. Ultimately, I shall argue that Schopenhauer's particular radical idealism is incompatible with the modern scientific view of the universe and consequently one cannot avow both positions simultaneously. I hope that in this way I shall convince my readers that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3) particular form of idealism ought to be rejected, thereby destroying the second pillar upon which his theory of immortality is based.

[8] However, in stating this, I wish to make emphatically perspicuous that I fully accept Schopenhauer's (1974b: 273-274) materialistic view of the brain; I only argue that it is incompatible with a radical idealist conception of the world. The materialistic view of the brain accords perfectly, however, with modern scientific views, to which I subscribe.

Before I commence the exposition in earnest, it is necessary to mention the numerous idiosyncrasies pertaining to the language employed herein; for whereas Schopenhauer was not an English philosopher, I am, unfortunately, not a native German speaker. As a consequence, I have been compelled to study Schopenhauer in translation.[9] Now although the gist of his thoughts are easily acquired by way of the translations; there are certain words, the translation of which, have always excited controversy.

The most famous of which is undoubtedly the German word "*Vorstellung*". The famous translator of Schopenhauer's works, E. F. J. Payne (1949: 97), translates the word as "representation", whereas David and Jill Berman (1995: xxxv), the translators of an abridged version of Schopenhauer's *opus maximum*, prefer the term "idea". The latter translators (cf. Berman, 1995: xxxv-xxxvi) offer as a corroboration of their choice the fact that Schopenhauer himself chose the word "idea" for the German "*Vorstellung*" when he began an English translation of Kant's *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*; furthermore, it is argued by David Berman (1995: xxxv) that the term "idea" indicates Schopenhauer's affinity with the British philosophers (such as Locke, Hume and Berkeley) who preceded him. Although I, too, favour the word "idea" for the English rendering of the German "*Vorstellung"*, the term unfortunately generates a twofold difficulty within Schopenhauer's system. Firstly, "idea" intimates *thoughts* as opposed to material objects; thus the term may erroneously be construed to refer to *concepts* – which are in fact derived from experience and are consequently truly *representations* thereof (I have, therefore, reserved the term "representations" for abstract ideas, i.e. concepts). Secondly, in connection with his aesthetic and evolutionary theories, Schopenhauer (1969a: 127-130) makes use of the Platonic Ideas or Forms; thus, the simultaneous use of the words "idea" and "Idea" may cause some confusion for readers who are unfamiliar with Schopenhauer's thought in particular and philosophy in general. I have consequently decided to render the German word "*Vorstellung"* as *appearance*,[10] even though "appearance" is not listed by Payne (1949: 96) as one of the

[9] I hope to one day rectify this shortcoming by learning the German language fluently. I can only hope that the translations I have utilised are not entirely mutilated or deficient, but accurately reflect Schopenhauer's meanings and intentions.

[10] The Oxford dictionary defines the term "appearance" as "the way that someone or something looks". Now this definition accords immaculately with the way in which I utilise the term; for as I argue at length herein, a "*Vorstellung*" – as I comprehend Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3) theory

acceptable renderings of the German term; however, I maintain that this term is far less confusing than either "representation" or "idea". But I felt it unconscionable to translate Schopenhauer's principal work as "*The World as Will and Appearance*", therefore I have retained the original German title of Schopenhauer's *opus maximum – Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* – throughout my exposition. Accordingly, the retention of one German title compelled me, for aesthetic reasons, to retain the German titles of Schopenhauer's *oeuvre in toto*, as well as the German titles of Kant's two works I have referred to herein, viz., *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft* and *Prolegomena zur einer Jeden Künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten Können* (which I simply refer to as the "*Prolegomena*").

A second term I have opted to retain in the original German is that of "*Wille-zum-Leben*". As Janaway (2008: 8) notes, the term's literal translation in English is "Will-to-live" – and this is the way in which Payne (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 275, et al.) translates it – however, it is not an entirely accurate translation as Janaway (2008: 8-9) notes, because "(a) […] it implicitly excludes the drive to reproduce life, and hence towards sexual behaviour, to which Schopenhauer gives great prominence and (b) because it lets in the wrong assumption that Schopenhauer is talking about a conscious *desire* to live, whereas *Will-zum-Leben* primarily operates to originate and shape the organism prior to any question of its having desires". I may also be permitted to add, as a clarification to Janaway's (2008: 8) first point, that, for Schopenhauer (1969a: 275), the Will does not solely seek to prolong the life of the *individual*, but life *in general*, i.e. "what the Will wills is always life", "*was der Wille Will immer das Leben ist*" (Cartwright, 2005: 187); hence it is undoubtedly more accurate to render the term as "Will-to-life" in English. But due to the fact that Payne (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 275, et al.) renders the term as "Will-to-live", whereas other commentators such as Janaway

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– is essentially an item within the mind which corresponds to an entity within the world. This notion is to be distinguished from the Berkeleyan (2004a: 61) theory of radical idealism, wherein objects are said to be solely ideas, without a corresponding external object to ground them. On Schopenhauer's account, and in contradistinction to the Berkeleyan variety, every object is essentially a concoction of the mind *which must necessarily correspond to the metaphysical Will* as the *ens realissimum*, i.e. "the most real being". Upon my interpretation, an object is therefore an appearance of the metaphysical entity; and this I take to be a vindication of the term employed herein.

(2008:8-9) render it as "Will-to-life", I have decided to retain the original German expression throughout my exposition.

Another term I have retained in the original German is that of "*Ding-an-sich*". My reason for this is that I believe it better facilitates for a construal of the world as it is in-itself as a *unity*, in accordance with Schopenhauer's (1969a: 113) pronouncements. In my estimation, the English translation, i.e. "thing-in-itself", inadvertently detracts therefrom. Furthermore, the retention of the original German compliments the other German term previously discussed; for the *Wille-zum-Leben is*, upon an orthodox interpretation of the Schopenhauerian philosophy, the *Ding-an-sich* (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100, Schopenhauer, 1889b: 216, and Schopenhauer, 1974b: 90, et al.).

It is also necessary to note that throughout the thesis I intentionally avoid utilising the Kantian term "noumenon". A noumenon literally means "things that are thought" (Beck, 2005: 694). Now, according to the Kantian philosophy, a noumenon (plural: noumena) refers to the inscrutable reality, i.e. the way in which reality exists *independently* of human consciousness (cf. Kant, 1950: 60) – consequently one cannot positively characterise the world in-itself according to Kant (1950: 37); one can solely define it in negative terms, i.e. one can only assert that it exists – its existence can be *thought*, but one cannot *know* it in the same way as a perceptible object is known (Scruton, 2001: 55-56). Of course, in Kant's (1950: 80) philosophy it is entirely acceptable to utilise the term "noumenon" or "noumena" to refer to this inscrutable mind-independent reality, for Kant never, to my knowledge, attempts to positively characterise the world as it is in-itself; however, it is inadmissible to do so within Schopenhauer's philosophy, for the traditional or orthodox interpretation, which construes Schopenhauer (1969a: 100, et al.) as identifying the Will as the *Ding-an-sich*, intimates that the world in-itself is known to us, and moreover, "better known than anything" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 376).[11] As a consequence thereof, it is erroneous,

[11] That which I refer to as the "traditional or orthodox interpretation" is the identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich*, as presented by Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) in the second book of the first volume of *Die Welt*. The contrary, or "maverick", interpretation is simply the qualification to the central thesis explicitly propounded by Schopenhauer (1969b: 196-197) in the second volume of his principal work, wherein he (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 197) claims that the Will is "[…] only the nearest and clearest *phenomenon* of the thing-in-itself […]", thereby

from an orthodox interpretation, to refer to the *Ding-an-sich* as a noumenon within the Schopenhauerian philosophy, for therein it is not, as in the case of Kant's philosophy, a mysterious, inscrutable unknown or mysterious X, but something *positively known* (cf. Schopenhauer, 1974b: 90).

However, the censure of the one Kantian term does not extend to its counterpart, viz., the term "phenomenon". For by this term one literally means "things that appear" (Beck, 2005: 694); and, indeed, I have argued that a perceptible object is nothing other than an appearance of the *Ding-an-sich* in the perceiving mind. Consequently, I have not refrained from utilising the terms "phenomenon" (plural: "phenomena") and "phenomenal" throughout my exposition.

intimating that there are other inscrutable aspects to the *Ding-an-sich*. As a consequence thereof, it is erroneous to apply the term "noumenon" to the traditional or orthodox interpretation of the Schopenhauerian philosophy, which considers the *Ding-an-sich* to be positively identified as the Will (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100, et al.); it would, however, be perfectly acceptable to utilise the term upon a maverick interpretation, for according thereto the *Ding-an-sich* cannot be known in its entirety (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969b: 196-198). For reasons I shall fully explicate in the course of my discussion, I subscribe wholeheartedly to the traditional or orthodox interpretation wherein the *Ding-an-sich* is fully identified with the Will; hence I cannot, in good conscience, utilize the terms "noumenon/noumena" and "noumenal". It is for this reason that I have censored the use of the term throughout my exposition.

Part I: An Introductory Account of Schopenhauer's Philosophy

The doctrine of athanasia is ordinarily associated with a religious conception of life: God, the immortal soul, heaven and hell are inextricably bound in the minds of many. It will therefore astonish those who make this erroneous association that Schopenhauer was both an atheist (Edwards, 2009: 173) and an advocate of life after death (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 501). Yet there is absolutely no contradiction in avowing both doctrines, for athanasia is as little dependent on the existence of a God as genuine moral behaviour is upon religious or legal injunctions.

Schopenhauer's (1969a: xv) thought is, as he himself admitted in the preface to the first edition of his principal work, indebted to three antecedent philosophical systems, viz., the Upanishads, Plato, and Kant. Undoubtedly, it is the last of which that is the most significant as Schopenhauer constructs his entire philosophy upon the bedrock of what he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 417) praisingly refers to as "Kant's greatest merit", viz., Kant's dichotomisation between the world-as-it-is-in-itself (*Ding-an-sich*) and the world-as-it-appears-to-perception (appearance), which is "based on the proof that between things and us there always stands the *intellect*, and that on this account they cannot be known according to what they may be in themselves" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 417-418). Kant (1950: 62) claims (rightly in my opinion) that the *Ding-an-sich* cannot be known independently of the mind, for any characterization thereof presupposes the mind. Schopenhauer (1969a: 100), in contradistinction thereto, maintains that this Kantian proscription applies solely to objects of the outer-sense and that consequently, by way of introspection, one is able to identify the *Ding-an-sich* with the volitional strivings in one's body:

> "To the subject of knowing, who appears as an individual only through the identity with the body, this body is given in two entirely different ways. It is given in intelligent perception as [appearance], as an object among objects, liable to the laws of these objects. But it is also given in quite a different way, namely as what is known immediately to everyone, and is denoted by the word *Will*" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100).

It is this concept, viz., the identification of the *Ding-an-sich* with the *Will*, which has immortalised Schopenhauer's name to posterity and earned him a place among the so-

called “great philosophers” of the Western canon (cf. Bertrand Russell’s *History of Western Philosophy*, 1946, pages 786-787).

Thus, in so far as Schopenhauer attempts to positively characterise the way the world is in-itself, it is no exaggeration to say that the Schopenhauerian philosophy can be conceived as an emendation and a continuation of the Kantian. Consequently, it is necessary to commence this study at the same point at which Schopenhauer begins his *opus maximum*, namely with a discussion of his Berkeleyan-inspired interpretation of Kantianism. As shall soon become apparent Schopenhauer’s arguments for radical idealism[12] form the foundation of his entire philosophy, including his doctrine of athanasia, and as such they are to be considered in earnest.

[12] The view that the world and everything therein is entirely mind-dependent.

2. Kant Identifies the Mind as an Active Entity

Few people are probably aware of the protracted and arduous development of the scientific method, which is arguably humankind's most sacred possession – despite its necessary limitations.[13] Yet its origins can be traced to the discipline of philosophy (Russell, 1999: 112) and in particular to "one of the greatest historic controversies" (Russell, 1999: 51) therein, viz., that "between the two schools called respectively 'empiricists' and 'rationalists'" (Russell, 1999: 51).[14] A pivotal stage in the development thereof occurred with the advent of René Descartes' *Meditations* in 1641, which ushered in the modern period of philosophical enquiry (Russell, 1999: 10). Descartes, as is generally well known, maintains that knowledge can be acquired by way of a consideration of the experience-independent "innate principles" contained within the mind (Bracken, 2002: 37). What this ultimately portends is that one can obtain knowledge about the world merely through the act of contemplation. Although this may now seem conspicuously erroneous to our modern, empirically-saturated minds, it did not initially appear so, for it is possible that by way of laborious concentration and a rigid application of logical principles one may be able to attain apodictic knowledge about the world. However, in the course of time, opposition to the rationalistic view inevitably mounted, ultimately culminating in the antithetical school of empiricism. According to these philosophers, of which the most famous are undoubtedly the three colossal British thinkers: Locke, Hume and Berkeley, knowledge can only be obtained by way of experience (Russell, 1999: 51). Thus, an early schism in modern philosophy, which unwittingly led to the development of the modern scientific method, is that between the rationalists on the one hand, who maintain that knowledge is derivable by way of a rigorous application of logical principles and, on the other hand, the empiricists, who maintain that all genuine knowledge can solely be

[13] I maintain that the scientific method is limited in its explanatory power due to the fact that it is dependent on the human mind. However, in propounding this view I do not portend that other forms of knowledge-acquisition, such as philosophy, religion and mysticism, are capable of filling the void, thereby supplying humankind with exhaustive knowledge. I discuss this matter in numerous parts of my disquisition.

[14] Roger Scruton (2001: 21) notes that "[t]his convenient, though contentious, division of […] rationalists and empiricists is in fact due to Kant".

acquired by way of experience. Yet, upon a close consideration of the matter, it is evident that both the rationalists and the empiricists are unable to account for certain difficulties and facts. The rationalists, for instance, may apply rigorous logical principles to a plethora of notions, none of which have a corresponding object to which they refer; while the radical empiricists are coerced to repudiate mathematics, even though it is evident that modern physics is capable of answering questions about phenomena insusceptible to empirical observation solely by way of mathematics.[15] It has taken centuries for the refinement of the modern scientific method, which is essentially an amalgamation of the rationalist and empiricist philosophies. What I mean by this is the following: a hypothesis, which is nothing but a fabrication of reason, must always be corroborated by empirical observation; yet after numerous instances of observing a phenomenon wherein Y proceeds from X one assumes, by way of inductive reasoning, that X (always) causes Y and thus the latter is assumed to follow the former as night does day. It is significant to note that this last generalisation is nothing but an *assumption* of reason, i.e. it is *not* based upon *logical principles* or *empirical observation*.

In offering this overly-simplistic illustration I have attempted to make evident that the modern scientific enterprise is founded upon an amalgamation of empiricism and rationalism, i.e. it oscillates between the two. It is erroneous to maintain that science is merely a form of radical empiricism, for, as I shall shortly discuss, the view which rigidly maintains that all knowledge is derivable from experience alone is actually inimical to the scientific enterprise. Now given that the scientific method is dependent on both logical formulations and experience (observation) it is no exaggeration to say that another colossal milestone in the history thereof is to be found in the "marvellous" (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 1) German philosopher, Immanuel Kant's attempt to reconcile both views. However, Kant's reconciliation of rationalism and empiricism generates one extremely interesting and significant consequence for our present study, viz., that the mind actively assists in the construction of reality. In so far as this notion forms the

[15] For instance, how do scientists measure the size of celestial bodies or the distance between galaxies, etc.? Such questions can solely be answered by way of an application of mathematical principles.

bedrock of Schopenhauer's system, let us consider in more detail the way in which Kant arrives at this revolutionary conclusion.

Initially Kant had been a rationalist, maintaining – like his mentor Leibniz – that all knowledge is derivable from the application of logical principles (Scruton, 2001: 21). Thus, Kant's writings until the publication of the *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft* in 1781 are considered inconsequential for the most part. The development of his so-called "Critical Philosophy", for which Kant's name is rightly forever immortalised, is to be found in his encounter with the work of his empirical predecessor, David Hume, from whom, Kant (1950: 8) states, he was awoken from "dogmatic slumber". Hume was a radical empiricist, maintaining that all genuine knowledge is acquired *solely* by way of experience. Now this may be taken to intimate that Hume was committed to the scientific enterprise, for science is primarily based upon empirical investigation, but Hume's arguments must be construed to intimate that science does not fare any better in producing genuine knowledge than pure reason; this is ultimately due to the fact that the radical empiricist maintains that only that which is experienced can be known with certainty. To make a claim about the world which is not based upon an experience thereof is to inadmissibly move from the empirical world to pure reason. Let us take as an illustration of this perplexing notion that of a flame. I think that I can confidently state that all mentally coherent individuals will agree that flames possess, among other properties, the quality of heat. But the radical empiricist maintains that such a general claim as to the properties of flames *in general* cannot be made: if one has not experienced every single flame – past, present and future – how can one know with certainty that *all* flames are hot? As Hume (2007: 36) states:

> "[…] If there be any suspicion that the course of nature may change, and that the past may be no rule for the future, all experience becomes useless, and can give rise to no inference or conclusion."

The point here is that general claims about the universe surpass empirical observation, and so far as the radical empiricist is concerned such general statements are inadmissible. The radical empiricist insists that in order for one to make the claim that *all* flames are hot, one must first have experienced every single flame – past, present and future. Of course, such a requirement is unsatisfiable owing to the finitude of human life and the restrictions imposed upon beings by time and space; hence the sole

conclusion is that the scientific enterprise is impossible on the radical empiricist account.

Thus, radical empiricism inevitably leads to scepticism (Scruton, 2001: 25). For if one insists on empirical observation for every claim to apodictic knowledge then one cannot rely on inductive reasoning, which is tacitly assumed by the modern method of scientific research. This last point is of immense significance and I shall therefore reflect on it at some length. A scientist, by way of pure reflection, might formulate a hypothesis, which he subsequently attempts to confirm by way of numerous experiments (empirical observations), thereafter, he assumes, by way of inductive reasoning, that the hypothesis must be veracious in so far as the postulated cause repeatedly produces the hypothesized effect; thus he concludes – and here is the leap from obstinate empiricism to assumptive rationalism – that the hypothesis will always hold true. Yet, from the perspective of the radical empiricist it is not certain that the one shall always and inevitably follow upon the appearance of the other. For instance, perhaps somewhere in the universe at present, or in the distant past or future, there is, was or will be a flame which does not emit heat. If this is so, then the statement "all flames are hot" is in fact erroneous, but ignorance owing to the finitude of human existence prevents one from realising this.

It ought to be evident then that closely associated with the predicament of inductive reasoning is that of causal connection, i.e. one often assumes a causal relationship between two objects even though "[…] there is not, in any single, particular instance of cause and effect, anything which can suggest the idea of power or necessary connection" (Hume, 2007: 60). In a sense, the causal law is a form of inductive reasoning, for it permits the generalisation of a connection between phenomena: i.e., to say that X causes Y portends that wherever one encounters Y one must necessarily assume X as its antecedent cause; yet what gives one the right to avow such a claim? The radical empiricist must here remind the modern scientist that it is not impossible that Y may have arisen due to factors other than X – in which case the generalisation or causal law which states "X causes Y" is erroneous. The attribution of a causal connection is in the last analysis, according to Hume (2007: 41), merely a product of "custom or habit". In other words, one witnesses the pairing of two phenomena on numerous occasions, such as a flame and heat (Hume, 2007: 42), and concludes that the one must necessarily follow from the other. Yet, one cannot say with any certainty

why the one must *necessarily* follow from the other; we merely anticipate the one from the other owing to the constant pairing or conjunction of those events, i.e. one arbitrarily assumes the necessary connection of two events based solely on the fact that one event follows another on numerous occasions (Hume, 2007: 69). Hence Hume (2007: 42) declares that "[c]ustom, […] makes us expect, for the future, a similar train of events with those which have appeared in the past" (Hume, 2007: 42). But it must be observed that custom originates within us, not the external world; therefore, empirically speaking, there is no cogent reason for maintaining that the two events will not admit of at least one exception; in which case the supposed causal connection between certain phenomena would be swiftly annulled (Hume, 2007: 36). It ought to be evident, then, that Hume's scepticism pertains to two fundamental features of scientific investigation, viz., inductive reasoning and the causal law.

Now, if one were to take this radical empiricist notion seriously one would not be able to arrive at any certainty by way of the scientific method: at best, one could only state that science offers what *appears* to be the most accurate description of the universe. But, as a thought experiment, we can entertain the radical empiricist view by imagining the possibility that perhaps the matter is not as it appears to us finite creatures, in spite of the repeated association of certain phenomena, such as the association of heat with flames. We modern humans confidently and erroneously assert our domination over the world by way of our imagined superior understanding thereof, thinking that the scientific method is infallible, its conclusions irrefragable and that it is capable of disclosing the absolute Truths of this mysterious universe in which we all find ourselves; however, we must necessarily humble ourselves before the radical empiricist's objection; for upon closer consideration it is evident that the scientific method is not as infallible as we often assume it to be.

Nowadays the discipline of science has become for many a surrogate form of religious belief, where once the words of Jehovah were accepted blindly as eternal truths, so now are the utterances of eminent scientists. As a consequence thereof many individuals are apt to disregard Hume's concerns as aberrations of an overly-sceptical mind. But this, in my estimation, intimates an absence of recondite thought, for Hume's observations are as pertinent now as they were when he first proposed them. For what – besides the unfounded assumptions of custom or habit – gives one the right to generalise an experience? This is a difficulty which I do not think that modern science has adequately

answered – Hume's scepticism remains a haunting spectre ever-looming over the scientific enterprise, which persists as humankind's most sacred possession *in spite* of that scepticism. Try as I might I must confess that I am unable to counter Hume's sceptical objections with cogent responses; as a consequence thereof I maintain that science ought to humble itself and not erroneously portray itself as a discipline capable of definitely solving every mystery of the universe.[16]

But although I am unable to counter Hume's scepticism, the "marvellous" (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 1) and, I might add, ingenious Kant attempted to do so; for he realises that an adequate answer to the predicament of how necessity can belong to the causal law would salvage science from the scepticism of the radical empiricist (Scruton, 2001: 25). In order to solve the difficulty one must first discover the source of universal and necessary knowledge and then indicate how that knowledge pertains to experience. To this end Kant (1950: 14), following Hume (2007: 25-26), dichotomised between two categories of knowledge, viz., analytical *a priori* knowledge and synthetical *a posteriori* knowledge. The former form of knowledge is founded upon and concerns pure reason alone. This type of knowledge does not require experience to confirm its claims and is consequently either true or false according to the principle of

[16] In stating this I must however emphatically insist that I do not portend that religion and philosophy can offer knowledge where science cannot; for all three disciplines depend on the human brain, which is by its very nature finite and subject to error. The notion maintained by some pious individuals, viz., that religion can answer the unanswerable, is based upon the erroneous view that revelation is handed to humankind by a transcendent omniscient being, i.e. a being not limited by sense organs and a finite brain has handed humankind profound knowledge about the universe and the origin of life. But in response thereto, and along with Schopenhauer (1974b: 361), I may be permitted to state that "[…] whoever can seriously think that beings who were not human had ever given information concerning the existence and purpose of our race and the world, is still only a big child. There is no revelation other than the thoughts of sages, although these are subject to error, as is the lot of everything human. These are often clothed in strange allegories and myths that are then called religions". In other words, all knowledge emanates from the human brain, which is, by its very nature, limited. Although it might be uncomfortable, the mature mind must accept that many mysteries of the universe are insoluble by the finite human mind, *ignoramus et ignorabimus* ("we do not know and we shall not know").

contradiction. The logical form of the principle of contradiction can be formulated as "the law [according to which] a proposition cannot be both true and false or that a thing cannot both have and not have a given property" (Grooten & Steenbergen, 1958: 90). Kant brilliantly defines analytical propositions as "explicative" statements, "adding nothing to the content of knowledge" (Kant, 1950: 14). These are propositions in which the subject-concept is contained within the predicate; so, for instance, "a vixen is a female fox" is true by virtue of the fact that the term "vixen" portends "female fox" and is merely a synonym thereof. Such a statement does not augment one's knowledge regarding the concept of a vixen, and, moreover, one need not consult experience to confirm the truth of that statement, it is known *a priori*. Given that analytic *a priori* statements are not based on experience they are universally veracious and necessary. In connection with my foregoing example of analytical *a priori* propositions this amounts to the claim that ten thousand years previously a vixen was a female fox, and ten thousand years hence a vixen will still be a female fox, even if these beautiful creatures should become extinct or the term to designate them should alter. The truth of this statement is universal and necessary.

The latter form of knowledge, viz., synthetical *a posteriori* knowledge, Kant describes as "expansive", "increasing the given knowledge" (Kant, 1950: 14). As such, all propositions in which the predicate is not contained within the subject-concept, and thus requires experience to confirm their truth, are synthetical *a posteriori* in nature. If I were to state that "my dog's coat is white in colour" one would not be able to determine the colour of my dog based on the subject-concept alone, for "my dog's coat" does not contain within itself any allusion to the colour thereof. Thus one must have recourse to experience in order to determine the truth of most[17] synthetical statements. Significantly, unlike analytical *a priori* statements, the principle of contradiction cannot determine the veracity of synthetical *a posteriori* propositions, and consequently these statements are conditional – neither universal nor necessary. Now, *prima facie*, it would appear that science is based solely on synthetical *a posteriori* propositions, for the scientific enterprise aims at augmenting knowledge by way of experimentation and inductive reasoning. But to return to Hume's concern: how can one know with any

[17] I say "most" because Kant identified a third type of knowledge which I shall shortly present and discuss.

degree of certainty that *synthetical* propositions are universally true and necessary? According to the perspective of the radical empiricist the proposition that "all flames are hot" can only be shown to be veracious if the concept of "flame" were to contain within itself, i.e. *a priori*, the notion of "hot".

This dichotomisation between analytical *a priori* knowledge and *synthetical a posteriori* knowledge leads inevitably to the conclusion that scientific knowledge is impossible because one can make universal and necessary statements solely about thoughts generated by pure reason, which have no pertinence to the world of experience, and not about notions acquired from experience. Kant's ingenious solution to this impasse was to identify a third type of knowledge, viz., *synthetic a priori* knowledge (Kant, 1950: 14-19). This knowledge incorporates elements from the two aforementioned types of knowledge: its statements pertain to experience and hence are *expansive*, "increasing the given knowledge" (Kant, 1950: 14); however, this knowledge *precedes* experience and is therefore both universal and necessary (*a priori)*.[18] What this ultimately portends, and expressed more succinctly, is that there is a type of knowledge which *precedes* experience and is yet *pertinent to* experience. This is perhaps the most significant notion in Kant's philosophy as it identifies the human mind as active; by which is meant that the mind is (partly, according to my interpretation; but not according to Schopenhauer's) responsible for the construction of reality. Prior to Kant it was thought that the mind passively receives impressions from the world – a *tabula rasa* upon which the world imprints itself (Kant, Bxvi). By identifying synthetic *a priori* knowledge Kant maintains that he has unequivocally shown the mind to be an element in the construction of experience; as he (Kant, Bxvi, xvii) states in the preface to the second edition of the *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*:

> "If the intuition had to conform to the constitution of objects, I would not understand how we would know anything of them *a priori*; but if the object (as object of senses) conformed to the constitution of our faculty of intuition, I could very well conceive such a possibility."

[18] Synthetic *a priori* knowledge accords perfectly with the modern scientific method which fuses rationalist and empiricist elements.

Kant compares his notion of the "active mind" to that of Copernicus' revolutionary heliocentric theory (Bxvi, xvii), but, as Jacques Choron (1963: 142) notes, the analogy is not an accurate one, because:

> "[…] Copernicus, by making 'the spectator revolve' instead of having the universe, the sun, and planets revolve around him, broke with geocentrism and dealt a crushing blow to anthropomorphism. Kant, however, by making nature conform to man's intuition and understanding, by insisting that 'the laws of nature are the laws of the experience of nature' (as Alois Riehl puts it), reaffirms anthropocentricism. In this sense it has been correctly said that what he calls his Copernican revolution in philosophy is rather a Ptolemaic counter-revolution."[19]

It must be noted that in so far as the *general* causal law is identified by Kant as *synthetic a priori* in nature it appears that Hume's scepticism regarding causality has *not* in fact been adequately addressed. For in the last analysis Kant's thesis regarding causality merely states: "the mind knows *a priori* that one event must precede and cause another"; it cannot explicate the particular causal connection between two particular phenomena. For instance, imagine that an individual afflicted with lung cancer approaches a medical doctor. The physician knows that something must have caused the illness, yet he cannot easily determine what it is. Naturally, in the case of an individual who inhales poisonous fumes it is tempting to attribute the aetiology of the illness thereto; but such an association does not always appear to be the case, i.e. there are instances of non-smokers developing lung cancer. Now if the particular instantiation of the causal law were synthetic *a priori* in nature then one would know immediately that X is the cause of Y. Yet, *in actu*,[20] this is never the case. In medicine and physics many aetiological explanations remain pure conjecture; thus does Hume's scepticism return: perhaps the majority of aetiological explanations are nothing more than formulations of custom or habit, i.e. a constant conjunction of unrelated phenomena. For instance, the doctor who notes that most patients afflicted with lung cancer smoked at some point in their lives attempts, by way of "custom" or "habit", to attribute the

[19] In due course it shall become apparent how Schopenhauer adds to this anthropocentricism by identifying the *Ding-an-sich* with the volitional strivings of humankind (cf. Tanner, 1999: 16).

[20] "In practice".

cause of the cancer to the poisonous fumes of the cigarette, pipe or cigar; yet, in spite of his assertion, he cannot truly explicate how such fumes are able to produce a malignant growth. Thus, even though the general law of causality may be intrinsic to the brain, i.e. although one knows *a priori* that "every effect must have an antecedent cause", it does not follow that every causal explanation conjured thereby is veracious. Thus, Hume's scepticism persists in spite of Kant's thesis being correct; i.e., even though the mind may be said to contain within itself a causal mechanism it cannot accurately determine aetiological relationships in the real world. In spite of this difficulty, Kant was, as Roger Scruton (2001: 129) notes, "regarded by his immediate successors as having irreversibly changed the course of philosophy". In particular, Kant's identification of the mind as an active entity which assists in the construction of reality forms the foundation of the entire Schopenhauerian philosophy. For Schopenhauer's *magnum opus* commences with a lengthy discussion on "the [appearance] subject to the principle of sufficient reason" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 1), wherein Schopenhauer (1969a: 3) attempts to argue "that everything that exists for knowledge, and hence the whole of this world, is only object in relation to the subject, perception of the perceiver, in a word, [appearance]".

3. The World as Appearance: First Part

Schopenhauer (1969a: 5-6) concurs with Kant in maintaining that the mind is an active organ. By "active" it is meant that the mind does not passively receive sensory data, but that it actively assists in the construction of perception (reality). Let us reflect on this recondite notion.

Most individuals assume that the world one perceives is akin to the world as it is prior to perception; thus, on this understanding, the universe is not mysterious: as it presents itself to us, so it is. For instance, one unacquainted with philosophy may assume that an object he perceives is akin to the object as it is in-itself, i.e. he maintains that the object is of a certain shape, colour and texture *independently* of his perception of it. This means, in effect, that the qualities attributed by him to the object inhere therein and continue to exist even when it is not being perceived. Indeed, nothing seems so obvious as the real existence of the perceptible world.[21] However, Schopenhauer (1969a: 417-418) maintains that these philosophically naïve individuals forget that between sensory data and perception there stands the mind, which acts as a filter, so to say, which thus transforms mere sensation into perception.

3.1. Sensations *vis-à-vis* Perceptions

Now before we proceed with the intricate discussion as to how the mind constructs reality, it is necessary to linger a while longer on the distinction between that of sensation/intuition on the one hand and perception on the other, as it is extremely significant to the development of the subsequent discussion. It must be noted that this distinction is not a superfluous idiosyncratic concoction which I have formulated in order to better comprehend – or complicate – the Schopenhauerian philosophy; on the contrary, as D. W. Hamlyn (2009: 18) notes, Schopenhauer (cf. 1889a: 59-60) himself emphatically insists on it.

Now for the sake of comprehensibility the sensations may be compared to rough, unpolished diamonds: in this state they are *raw*, i.e. they are senseless, without

[21] In my subsequent discussion I argue, however, that this view is, with qualification, correct.

meaning: a kaleidoscope of colours, shapes, sounds and such like. Just as it is difficult for the untrained individual to identify an unpolished stone as being a diamond, so too would it be impossible (if one could experience them directly, i.e. without the mechanisms of the mind) to make sense of raw sensations. Sensations are essentially of a *subjective* nature (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 60), i.e. they are experienced solely by the *knowing subject* and exist solely for that subject. But we must remark, even at this undeveloped stage, that the sensations admit of a twofold nature: they can either originate from within or from without the subject. The former are illusions or figments of one's imagination, wherein no *real* or *external object* corresponds to or grounds the sensations; whereas the latter require a derivation from something external to the subject, otherwise such sensations are nothing but those of the former sort, i.e. mere chimeras of the subject's imagination. Let us reflect on this significant point. If, for instance, one experiences a burning sensation on one's limb one may attribute the cause thereof to either an external or an internal source.[22] In the latter case we may speak of hallucinations: the mind fabricates a sensation to which no external or real object corresponds. Indeed, this is precisely the definition of the term "hallucination". In contrast, the former requires the postulation of some object impinging upon the body from without and thus producing sensations therein. In the case of sensations without any external validity one would be expected to speak of chimeras or "figments of the imagination", whereas sensations which rely on external objects may be referred to as genuine and *real*, i.e. existing independently of the mind.[23] Thus, in order for one to distinguish between figments of one's imagination (hallucinations) and empirically real

[22] By "external" I portend something which actually exists external to the subject; whereas by "internal" I portend that which exists solely within the mind of the subject and does not have a corresponding object.

[23] In propounding this view I do not wish to give the erroneous impression that sensations which originate from within the subject's body are hallucinatory in nature. For instance, a blockage in an artery may cause pain and such must be considered as genuine. Here, even though the sensations are caused from something within the subject's body, they are *external* in so far as they are not mere illusions of the brain. Internal sensations refer specifically to those which originate within the brain and do not correspond to anything external to it; whereas external sensations refer to anything external to the brain (even within the subject's own body) which produce sensations in the brain.

objects we must acknowledge the necessity of an external, empirically real object *causing* sensations within the subject's body. This, however, is, as we shall see, problematical on Schopenhauer's account for two reasons: (i) Schopenhauer (1969a: 81, cf. also page 100) does not think that the causal law can be applied to sensations or to the object as it is in-itself, and (ii) Schopenhauer (1969a: 80) does not think that the essence or source of objects is empirical or material, but rather a unified metaphysical entity.[24] In spite of these potential difficulties, which I will discuss in due course, I wish for the moment only to emphasize the necessity of some *externally real object* in the case of non-hallucinatory sensations; for if one rejects the existence of such external objects as a cause or grounding of sensations then it becomes impossible to distinguish illusion from reality. We shall return to this matter in connection with Schopenhauer's teaching in due course, but for the moment I hope that I have illustrated the essential characteristics of sensations, viz., that they are immediate and unintelligible, i.e. without form or meaning.

We may determine the idiosyncratic veracity, i.e. in connection with the Schopenhauerian philosophy, of the abovementioned characterisation of sensations by noting that in the second edition of his doctoral dissertation, *Über die vierfache Wurzel des Satzes vom zureichenden Grunde*,[25] Schopenhauer (1889a: 59-60) describes sensations as "a miserably poor thing"; and he states, further:

> "Even in the noblest of our organs it is nothing but a local, specific feeling, susceptible of some slight variation, still in itself always subjective and, as such therefore, incapable of containing anything objective, anything like perception. For sensation is and remains a process within the organism and is limited, as such, to the region within the skin; it cannot therefore contain anything which lies beyond that region, or, in other words, anything that is outside us.[26] A

[24] However, that is not to suggest that reality cannot be distinguished from hallucination within the Schopenhauerian philosophy, for as we shall see, one can argue that real objects are manifestations of the world as it is in-itself, whereas hallucinations have no such grounding. This issue will be made perspicuous in the course of the discussion.

[25] *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (first edition published in 1813; second and definitive edition in 1847).

[26] Although it is true that sensations are experienced subjectively it seems to me that they must originate externally if they are to be distinguished from hallucinations. Schopenhauer wishes

> sensation may be pleasant or unpleasant – which betokens a relation to the Will – but nothing objective can ever lie in any sensation. In the organs of the senses, sensation is heightened by the confluence of the nerve-extremities, and can easily be excited from without on account of their extensive distribution and the delicacy of the envelope which encloses them; it is besides specially susceptible to particular influences, such as light, sound, smell; notwithstanding which it is and remains mere sensation, like all others within our body, consequently something essentially subjective, of whose changes we only become immediately conscious in the form of the *inner* sense, Time: that is, successively."

Now if sensations are akin to the asperous, opaque diamond-stone then, to continue the analogy, perceptions may be compared to the cut and polished diamond: they are thus intelligible and meaningful. In the parlance of the Schopenhauerian philosophy perceptions are intelligible appearances, i.e. empirical and experienceable objects. Now, in just the same way as the hands and instruments of the craftsman alter the asperous raw stone into a symmetrically glistening diamond, so too does the mind, by way of certain innate mechanisms, transform the jumble of sensations into intelligible perceptions. In other words, following Kant, Schopenhauer (1969a: 6-13) maintains that the mind contains mechanisms, which he refers to as the "principle of sufficient reason", which transform unintelligible sensory data into meaningful perceptions.

Sensation, then, is not akin to perception, and anyone who remains doubtful of the mind's ability to transform sensations into perceptions need only consider the following examples. In the first place, our incredulous individual may consider Wittgenstein's rabbit-duck drawing. In-itself this illustration is neither a rabbit nor a duck, it is solely black lines upon a white page: it is the active, engaging mind that causes one to see at one moment a rabbit and at another a duck. But the phenomenon can also be observed in an activity which most, if not all, have undoubtedly experienced in the course of life, most probably in childhood, viz., the construal of objects in the clouds. The ability to see mundane earthly objects in the irregular shapes of the clouds is a wonderful illustration of the way in which the mind transforms chaotic sensations into orderly perceptions. In a similar vein, this notion was the leitmotif of the surrealist artist René

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to emphasise the subjectivity of sensations in order to argue in favour of radical idealism. This will become evident in due course.

Magritte's famous painting *La trahison des images.*[27] The painting, as is well known, depicts a pipe, below which is the caption which reads *"ceci n'est pas une pipe"*.[28] The painting intimates the notion that the mind constructs the image (or perception) of a pipe from a conglomeration of senseless colours and lines (i.e. sensations). Sensations, therefore, precede perceptions and I reiterate that in due course we shall enquire as to the origins of the former within the Schopenhauerian philosophy.

Schopenhauer (1889a: 67-83) himself offers a few compelling empirical observations in support of the thesis that the mind is capable of assisting in the construction of perception, and I shall reiterate the two I consider to be the most pertinent for the sake of persuasion. In his doctoral dissertation he (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 68-69) presents in favour of this view the fact that the image perceived by the eye is inverted; this is due to the fact that light from the top of an object reflects at the bottom of the retina, whereas light projected from the bottom of an object reflects at the top of the retina. Hence the image reflected in the eye is an upside-down one; but the brain corrects this error by placing objects in their correct position (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 69). Furthermore, and no less compelling, is the fact that we see with two eyes and yet we perceive a single image (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 69); this is due to the fact that the brain combines the two separate sensations received by each eye and transforms them into a single coherent perception (ibid.).

All this undoubtedly proves that the mind assists in the construction of one's image of the world, but it does not necessarily prove that the world, *in toto*, is a mere idea or appearance in the mind of an observer. We must, consequently, consider in more detail the way in which the mind is said to construct the world. To this end, Schopenhauer (1969a: 6) maintains that the mind contains certain innate mechanisms through which all sensations are filtered prior to becoming perceptions. But, I have been referring very generally to the so-called "innate mechanisms of the mind" and the "principle of sufficient reason" without explicitly describing them. To return to an earlier discussion, the significance of which will now become perspicuous, the innate mechanisms of the mind are properties which precede perception and yet pertain thereto; in a word, these innate mechanisms are the *synthetic a priori* forms identified by Kant (Schopenhauer,

[27] "The treachery of images".

[28] "This is not a pipe".

1969: 5-6).[29] As such, these *synthetic a priori* mechanisms are essential components of perception and they are thus necessary and universal. Kant had argued that these mechanisms comprise of twelve categories (which include causality, substance, accident and so on), and two forms of intuition, viz., time and space (Scruton, 2001: 40). In this way the mind transforms senseless sensory data into intelligible perception. But it is at this point that the first major schism between Schopenhauer and Kant occurs. For the former (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 448) amends the latter's theory by rejecting eleven of the so-called categories and retaining solely that of causality[30] and the two forms of intuition (time and space), which Schopenhauer came to refer as the *principium individuationis*.[31] To this end Schopenhauer (1969a:6) transforms the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind into *the principle of sufficient reason*, which according to the law of homogeneity,[32] i.e. according to its general expression, renders the world entirely comprehensible and thus acts as the bedrock for both ordinary experiences and scientific endeavours. In short, the general expression of the principle of sufficient reason states that there exists a cogent explanation for absolutely every observable and possible phenomenon in the world. It can thus be succinctly expressed

[29] As a consequence of this observation, it would be more correct to refer to these mechanisms as the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind. I shall therefore henceforth refer to the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind, as opposed to the hackneyed and technically erroneous expression "innate mechanisms of the mind".

[30] I must confess that I have been unable to comprehend Schopenhauer's reason for this emendation of Kant's theory. Initially I maintained that perhaps Schopenhauer thought that the eleven categories were ultimately reducible to that of causality, but he never explicitly states this. He (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 458 and Schopenhauer, 1969b: 305) merely equates accident and substance (which he identifies with matter, cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 458) with causality. Thus, we must suppose that due to the fact that substance and accident are ultimately reducible to causality, it is redundant to list them separately. I can only tentatively conjecture that this is true of the remaining nine Kantian categories, i.e., perhaps Schopenhauer (1969a: 448) rejects eleven of Kant's twelve categories because he believes all of them to be ultimately reducible to causality.

[31] "The principle of individuation".

[32] A law which seeks to discover unity in diversity (Cartwright, 2005: 82).

by Christian Wolf's expression: "*Nihil est sine ratione cur potius sit, quam non sit*." – "nothing is without a reason for its being" (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 5).

But according to Schopenhauer (1889a: 30) the principle of sufficient reason contains subtle distinctions and these must be acknowledged in accordance with the law of specification, which attempts to identify diversity in unity (Cartwright, 2005: 160).[33] Thus Schopenhauer (1889a: 30) identifies four forms of the principle of sufficient reason, which I shall now list and explicate in accordance with his presentation of them in his doctoral dissertation:

(1) *Principium fiendi* – the principle of sufficient reason of *becoming*, which concerns the law of causality and has as its object intuitive appearances, i.e. *reale Objekte*, which are material or physical objects.[34]
(2) *Principium cognoscendi* – the principle of sufficient reason of *knowing*, which concerns the laws of logic and has as its object abstract representations, i.e. concepts.
(3) *Principium essendi* – the principle of sufficient reason of *being*, which is concerned with the non-empirical intuitions of time and space; and finally
(4) *Principium agendi* – the principle of sufficient reason of *acting*, which occupies itself with a unique form of the causal law, viz. that of motivation (which Schopenhauer (1889a: 171) identifies as "causality seen from within"), and consequently has as its object the Will of the individual.

3.2. *Principium Cognoscendi*

I shall shortly elaborate upon the way in which the *principium fiendi* (the principle of sufficient reason of becoming, i.e. the law of causality) and the *principium essendi* (the

[33] It may be useful for one to conceive of this distinction between that of homogeneity and specification in terms of a family. The family may be considered as a collective according to their family name (i.e. the law of homogeneity) or they may be considered individually, by their first names (i.e. the law of specification).

[34] Cf. Footnote 4 (p. 88) in F. C. White's essay *The Fourfold Root* in *The Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer* (1999, ed. by Christopher Janaway).

principle of sufficient reason of being, i.e. time and space) contribute to the construction of appearances (perceptions). But, before I do, I must also acknowledge and turn to a discussion of a third form of the principle which in due course shall be of much significance to the discussion on humankind's knowledge of the inevitability of death, viz., the *principium cognoscendi*, i.e. the principle of sufficient reason of knowing.

In the appendix to the first volume of his *magnum opus*, Schopenhauer (1969a: 431-432; 437) excoriates Kant for not properly distinguishing between perceptual and abstract knowledge. It is by way of the identification of the *principium cognoscendi* (the principle of sufficient reason of knowing, i.e. the laws of logic) that Schopenhauer attempts to correct this serious deficiency of his mentor. He (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 114) claims that one of the regions of the brain, which he refers to as the *faculty of reason*, is responsible for forming concepts (abstract knowledge), which is distinct from perceptual knowledge. We shall shortly see that immediate knowledge, i.e. knowledge of the perceptible world, is acquired by way of the faculty of the Understanding, i.e. the *principium fiendi*; and Schopenhauer (1889a: 115) maintains that concepts are derived from these primary perceptions, i.e. they are representations drawn from appearances. Now it must be understood that concepts are essentially universal abstractions of particular objects. For instance, the universal concept of "dog" is something intangible and impossible to express pictorially, for it is an abstraction of many particular types of dogs: one may observe numerous breeds, such as Yorkshire Terriers, German Shepherds, Maltese Poodles, Chihuahuas, Pit Bulls, Pomeranians, etc., and form therefrom the abstract conception of "dog". In other words, the mind discards all that is inessential and retains solely those characteristics which are constitutive of the concept of "dog" in general (cf. Schopenhauer, 1889a: 116). Now, just because the concept is a general abstraction, it cannot pictorially represent every particular type owing to the diversity thereof. In other words, the universal concept of "dog" encompasses every single breed of dog, both extant and extinct, and therefore cannot be pictorially depicted, for if one were to attempt to draw an image of the universal concept of "dog" it would undoubtedly adhere to the characteristics of one sort of breed, while omitting an array of characteristics essential to others.[35] This is an extremely

[35] In attempting to sketch a silhouette of this universal dog one might, for instance, depict it with pointed-ears; but in doing so one would omit all breeds of dogs with droopy-ears.

significant point for it intimates that concepts (abstractions), unlike perceptions which are certain and tangible, are extremely vague and intangible: "[t]hey must of necessity be exceedingly empty, poor, and therefore also dreadfully tiresome" (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 116). In spite of this potentially problematic fact, it is evident that the concept is derived from the perceptible world (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 114); in other words, the universal concept of, for instance, "dog" is an abstraction of many particular instantiations of different types of perceptible dogs. To this end Schopenhauer (1889a: 115) states:

> "[Abstract representations] have been called *conceptions*, because each comprehends innumerable individual things in, or rather under, itself, and thus forms a complex. We may also define them as *representations drawn from perceptions*. For, in forming them, the faculty of abstraction decomposes the complete, intuitive [perceptions] into their component parts, in order to think each of these parts separately as the different qualities of, or relations between, things. By this process, however, the representations necessarily forfeit their perceptibility; just as water, when decomposed, ceases to be fluid and visible. For although each quality thus isolated (abstracted) can quite well be *thought* by itself, it does not at all follow that it can be *perceived* by itself. We form conceptions by dropping a good deal of what is given us in perception, in order to be able to think the rest by itself. To conceive therefore is to think less than we perceive. If, after considering divers objects of perception, we drop something different belonging to each, yet retain what is the same in all, the result will be the *genus* of that species. The generic conception is accordingly always the conception of every species comprised under it, after deducting all that does not belong to *every* species. Now, as every possible conception may be thought as a *genus*, a conception is always something general, and as such, not perceptible. Every conception has on this account also its *sphere*, as the sum-total of what may be thought under it. The higher we ascend in abstract thought, the more we deduct, the less therefore remains to be thought. The highest, i.e. the most general conceptions, are the emptiest and poorest, and at last become mere husks, such as, for instance, being, essence, thing, becoming, etc., etc."

Now it may be thought that within the Schopenhauerian system the concept can be equated with the notion of a Platonic Idea; for the latter, like the former, are general and stand to individual extant objects as universals to particulars (Schopenhauer, 1969a:

128-130). However, it must be observed that concepts are derived *from* perceptions, and not *vice versa*; hence it is erroneous to equate them with the Platonic Ideas. In order to elucidate this point it is necessary for one to become conscious of the fact that Platonic Ideas *precede* perception as prototypes to ectypes (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 129-130), whereas concepts, being a unique type of appearance, are a derivation from perception; and must, therefore, themselves be considered ectypes (of perceptions) (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 40). Thus, abstract knowledge is secondary, twice removed from the object as it is in-itself: it is a representation[36] of a perception; whereas Platonic Ideas are primary and are said to precede extant objects, they are thus referred to by Schopenhauer (1969a: 175) as the most "*adequate objectivity*" of the *Ding-an-sich*. In the parlance of the Schopenhauerian philosophy we may say that concepts exist on the side of appearances, whereas the Platonic Ideas exist (with difficulty, cf. Schopenhauer's discussion of the matter in 32 of the first volume of *Die Welt*) in the realm of the *Ding-an-sich*.[37] It is for this reason that the abstract concept should not be confounded with the notion of the Platonic Idea. Although I do not wish to anticipate the development of my exposition, I wish, in presenting the foregoing discussion on abstraction and concepts, to impart one extremely significant observation, viz., that concepts – being doubly removed from the *Ding-an-sich*, i.e. given that they are representations of appearances (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 115) – cannot disclose knowledge about the world as it is in-itself. This is significant in so far as in a later section I argue that Schopenhauer's notion of the Will may be considered a concept,

[36] I reiterate that I intentionally use the word "representation" here, as concepts are essentially copies of perceptions and thus stand to them as representations; just as painted pictorial images stand to real objects as representations thereof. I argue, however, that the term "representation" should not be used in connection with the objects constructed by the Understanding and Sensibility (which I have termed "appearances") as these do not, on Schopenhauer's (1969a: 99 and 502) account, represent the mind-independent object but are *toto genere* different therefrom.

[37] The matter is difficult because Schopenhauer (1969a: 113), as we shall see, claims that the *Ding-an-sich* is atemporal and aspatial, i.e. it is a unity. Consequently, it follows therefrom, that it cannot contain a plethora of individual objects such as the Platonic Ideas. Be that as it may, I wish to stress that *the Platonic Ideas are certainly not to be thought of as appearances*.

i.e. an abstraction of perception, and thus it is questionable whether the term can truly be regarded as a genuine characterisation of the way the world is in-itself.

3.3. *Principium Fiendi* and *Principium Essendi*

Now, it is by way of an appeal to the principles of becoming and being that Schopenhauer attempts to argue that the mind constructs an appearance.[38] But how exactly does it do so? The answer may be succinctly expressed thus: the mind receives raw, unintelligible sensory data which come into contact with the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms residing therein; in this way it constructs an appearance out of the disorganised and unintelligible data. This notion can be best illustrated by way of an equation: sensations + the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind = perceptions (ideas, appearances). To elaborate: the mind instantaneously applies two principles of sufficient reason in order to create perceptions from sensations, viz., the principles of becoming and being. It employs the *principium essendi*, which is comprised of a twofold nature, i.e. it applies "the faculty of the inner sensibility [which] imposes the form of time, [and the] faculty of the outer sensibility [which] imposes the form of space" (White, 2008: 66) onto sensations; thereby producing innumerable, individuated objects. But time and space are, as White (2008: 67) notes, insufficient in producing perceptible objects, a third component is required if one is to have experience of a perceptible world. This component is found in the Understanding, which has the sole

[38] It ought to be recalled from the introductory section that due to the fact that the term "representation" may erroneously and inadvertently intimate that Schopenhauer thought perceptions in the minds of perceiving individuals are nothing more than replicas, i.e. representations, of similarly constituted external objects, I have opted for the less ambiguous word "appearance" *in lieu* thereof. Moreover, "appearance" indicates something illusory and insubstantial, which accords with Schopenhauer's (1969a: 17) characterisation of life as a dream. As I mentioned, the word "idea" would also have been suitable because it illustrates Schopenhauer's connection to Locke and Berkeley (cf. pages xxxv - xxxvi of David Berman's introduction to the abridged version of Schopenhauer's principal work); however, there is a potential for one to confuse it with the Platonic Idea. I have therefore selected "appearance" instead of "idea" to avoid any confusion, cf. the introduction.

task of applying the *principium fiendi*, i.e. the law of causality, to sensations, as Schopenhauer (1889a: 60) explicates:

> "It is only when the *Understanding* begins to act – a function, not of single, delicate nerve-extremities, but of that mysterious, complicated structure weighing from five to ten pounds, called the brain[39] – only when it begins to apply its sole form, *the causal law*, that a powerful transformation takes place, by which subjective sensation becomes objective perception."

It seems, then, that the complicated process whereby sensations are transformed into perceptions can be succinctly explained thus: two regions of the brain, which Schopenhauer (1889a: 58 and 154) refers to as "the Understanding" (*der Verstand*) and "the Sensibility" (*Sinnlichkeit*) are responsible for the formation of appearances. In other words, the *principium fiendi* and the *principium essendi* work in unison to create a perceptible object. Allow me to elaborate. Schopenhauer, as Cartwright (2005: 175) notes, maintains that the Understanding has the sole function of applying the law of causality to sensory data, thereby transforming a senseless jumble of sensations into a meaningful appearance, i.e. an object. The Understanding does this by positing an object in space and time for every sensation it receives (Cartwright: 2005: 175). In this way the Understanding causes the image of an object to appear in the mind without postulating the existence of an objective causality. In other words, the mind receives sensations from the *Ding-an-sich*, which immediately come into contact with the *principium fiendi* and the *principium essendi*: the latter by means of inner sensibility places the sensation in time, and by means of the outer sensibility in space; the Understanding then apprehends that a sensation must have an external cause and posits the existence of a spatial and temporal object, subject to the law of causality. This is, in essence, the way in which the active mind creates appearances (perceptions), according to Schopenhauer (1889a: 60).

[39] Schopenhauer's materialist theory of mind generates profound complications for his claim that "*die Welt ist meinen Vorstellung*" ("the world is my appearance"). This difficulty will be discussed in earnest in the second section of the thesis.

3.4. Objective Causality

However, we must observe that two pressing difficulties arise on this account. The first concerns the problem of what I shall refer to as "objective causality", i.e. mind-independent causality.

It is evident – even though Schopenhauer tends to avoid an explicit admission of the fact for reasons I shall shortly attempt to explicate – that the raw, unintelligible sensory data must be akin to or, rather, originate from the *Ding-an-sich*; for sensations, in contrast to perceptions, must have a mind-independent origin. However, in saying this, I do not wish to give the false impression that idealism, even of the radical kind, is always committed to the view that some substance or entity must necessarily underlie perceptions (as in the case of Berkeley's idealism, no such substance or entity is considered extant), but this is in fact the only way in which Schopenhauer's idealism can be comprehended; for unlike Berkeley, Schopenhauer (1969a: 98-99 and 1969b: 7) does not wish to propound a philosophy of *immaterialism*, i.e. the view that appearances are *hollow*, by which I portend that they lack an inner, underlying substance as a foundation for their existence. I shall, for the moment, disregard the fundamental nature of this essence which underlies appearances; but I wish to make lucid a serious inconsistency inherent in this view, i.e., that something external to the perceiver can cause sensations therein. If causality is an *a priori* form of the mind it cannot be utilised in an explanation as to how appearances appear therein (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 13), i.e. causality cannot form a bridge (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 19) between appearances and the world as it is in-itself. In other words, one cannot appeal to an objective form of causality in attempting to explicate how perceptions are generated within the subject's mind if one maintains the *a priority* of the causal law. However, the view here presented is committed to just such a contradictory notion: for some external entity, i.e. the *Ding-an-sich*, is said to *cause* sensations in the subject, and thus causality is unwittingly assumed to have a mind-independent existence. For, I reiterate, if sensations which cause perceptions, originate from without then the causal bond between the external object and the subjectively experienced sensations cannot be conditioned by the mind, but must exist independently thereof. The difficulty is that for the radical idealist appearances cannot be said to be caused by anything external. But if that were the case how is one to distinguish reality from illusion? Previously I defined hallucinations as

figments of one's imagination to which no externally real object corresponds; yet if all appearances are mere fabrications of the mind then it does indeed become impossible to distinguish illusion from reality. However, it is erroneous to construe Schopenhauer's philosophy in this sense for he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 99-100) thinks that something does in fact underlie appearances, viz., the *Ding-an-sich*. The difficulty arises when Schopenhauer attempts to explicate how the *Ding-an-sich* produces appearances in the subject's mind; for he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100) dogmatically adheres to the *a priority* of causality and refuses to accept that there may in fact exist an *external*, i.e. a non-mind-dependent, causal bond between the *Ding-an-sich* and sensations. Yet the difficulty cannot be avoided: Schopenhauer's theory demands the postulation of two types of causality, viz., one uncontroversially subjective, which transforms sensations into perceptions, and another contentiously objective, which produces sensations in the body from some external entity one cannot experience or know in the ordinary sense, viz., the *Ding-an-sich*. Of course, the admission of an external form of causality would tacitly admit the "absolute reality" of the world (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 19); which is, of course, inimical to Schopenhauer's argument for radical idealism; but the difficulty as to how non-hallucinatory sensations occur cannot be explicated without recourse to the notion of such an "objective causality".

Indeed, Schopenhauer (1969a: 435-437) excoriated Kant for applying the law of causality in this objective, mind-independent sense but I maintain that he himself cannot avoid the difficulty. Now instead of admitting the possibility of a mind-independent form of causality he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 14) finds subterfuge in arguing that the correlativity thesis, which is the thesis which states that every object presupposes a subject and *vice versa* (Cartwright, 2005: 164), precedes the application of the principle of sufficient reason. For, as mentioned, Schopenhauer (1969b: 7) does not wish to propounded an *immaterialist* form of radical idealism, i.e. he does not wish to argue that perceptions (appearances) are hollow or that they do not have an existence apart from the perceiving subject. As a consequence thereof, it is necessary for Schopenhauer to explicate how the *Ding-an-sich* can underlie appearances without the former causing the latter. To this end Schopenhauer (1969b: 14-15) argues that the most fundamental mechanism of the brain is the so-called "correlativity thesis". This latter principle may be succinctly defined by the proposition "*no object without a subject*" (Cartwright, 2005: 164) and it has a twofold nature. On the one hand, the correlativity

thesis states that every object presupposes the existence of a subject: for in order for one to acquire knowledge it is necessary for some entity to become a perceptible object for consideration by a particular subject; i.e. for everything that is *known* there must of necessity be a *knower*, but the former is not knowing and the latter is not known (Cf. Schopenhauer 1969b: 197). But just as every object presupposes a subject, so too does every subject presuppose the existence of perceptible objects (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 14), for "[a] consciousness without object is no consciousness at all" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 15). This aspect of the correlativity thesis is not as easily comprehensible as its aforementioned counterpart; however, it appears that Schopenhauer (1969b: 14-15) is intimating that it is impossible for the consciousness of a subject to be utterly devoid of material: hence, the appearance of the subject necessarily entails the existence of the object, just as its converse is said to do:

> "[…] The intellect and matter are correlatives, in other words, the one exists only for the other; both stand and fall together; the one is only the other's reflex. They are in fact really one and the same thing, considered from two opposite points of view." (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 15-16)

Thus, it is by way of the correlativity thesis that Schopenhauer attempts to avoid the claim which would inevitably refute radical idealism, viz., that the *Ding-an-sich* is the cause of sensations and is consequently a real, i.e. material, object. Schopenhauer (1969a: 14-16) appeals to the correlativity thesis in an attempt to illustrate that the subject and object exist simultaneously, i.e. as mutually complementary entities, without invoking the notion of an objective form of causality. Now given that the correlativity thesis is said to be so fundamental that it even precedes the application of the causal law (Cartwright, 2005: 164) it is evident that Schopenhauer utilises it in an attempt to avoid the difficulty of objective causality. In this way, the problem as to how some external object can cause sensations in the subject when causality is said to be strictly *a priori* is seemingly averted, for the subject and object are said to presuppose one another without invoking the notion of cause and effect. However, I must observe that the solution generates a unique difficulty of its own: for does not the dichotomisation between subject and object presuppose the *principium individuationis*? In order for the subject to be separate from the object both must occupy a different space at the same time, or appear in the same space at different times. Consequently, the correlativity thesis seems to presuppose the *principium essendi* (i.e. the principle of

sufficient reason of being, which is concerned with time and space) and it therefore cannot be said to precede the application of the principle of sufficient reason (Cartwright, 2005: 164). Thus, in spite of Schopenhauer's bold attempt, the matter remains an unresolved difficulty within his philosophy.

3.5. Heterogeneity from Homogeneity

The second difficulty generated by Schopenhauer's epistemological theory is how manifold heterogenous objects can be derived from a homogeneous unity. In short, one may justifiably wonder why the Understanding posits numerous objects if the sensations emanate from a homogeneous entity; for it is obvious that on such an account the Understanding must ultimately be held responsible for the appearance of the manifold objects one experiences. But if this is so, then why should the mind generate the particular appearances it does? Why does the mind not, for instance, conjure up flying pink elephants or fish with hands and feet? Schopenhauer, unfortunately, does not address this concern and the matter is left unresolved within his philosophy. In my discussion on the different forms of idealism, and in particular my discussion of the way in which I comprehend Kant, however, I shall offer a cogent explication of this phenomenon, but my answer stands in opposition to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 112-113) teaching: for I maintain that the only cogent explanation for the appearance of multifarious objects is the postulation of the world as it is in-itself possessing heterogeneity. On my account, therefore, there are manifold objects owing to the disparity in the essence of the objects themselves. Thus, although I concur with the Kantian notions that the world as it is in-itself is impervious to knowledge and that the mind constructs reality, I argue that it does so only partially and that the world as it is in-itself cannot be an homogeneous unity, but must, in contradistinction to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 112-113) teaching, be divergent.[40] For if one refuses to

[40] Schopenhauer (1969a: 113) declares that "[the *Ding-an-sich*] is free from all *plurality*, although its phenomena in time and space are innumerable. It is itself one, yet not as an object is one, for the unity of an object is known only in contrast to possible plurality". In short, this portends that the *Ding-an-sich*, according to Schopenhauer's understanding thereof, is homogenous.

acknowledge the veracity of my observation then he must either confess the impossibility of being able to explicate the fact of the world appearing as it does, or he must attempt to discover something inherent to the Understanding which causes it to create a multifarious appearance of objects. The two alternatives seem to me untenable, for in the former case we are not brought to any deeper comprehension of the world, and in the latter case we would be compelled to arbitrarily postulate an explanation which is bound to be subject to intense scrutiny.

3.6. Schopenhauer's Arguments for Radical Idealism

The appeal to considerations such as the inversion of an image in the eye (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 67-69) and the phenomenon of "double vision" (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 69-72) offer compelling evidence that the mind (brain) does indeed assist in the construction of one's idiosyncratic view of the world, but they do not prove Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3) ultimate thesis, viz., that the world *in toto* is mind dependent. To that end we must turn to a consideration of the arguments Schopenhauer propounds in favour of idealism. In his article *Schopenhauer and Transcendental Idealism*, Douglas McDermid (2012: 73-79) identifies twelve such arguments. McDermid's is the most exhaustive list I have discovered hitherto, however, some of the arguments are less convincing than others and I shall consequently omit some of them and follow the eminent Schopenhauerian scholar Christopher Janaway (2002: 30) by discussing at length solely five of the arguments in favour of idealism.[41] It must be said, however, that these five arguments are the most convincing and they may accordingly be considered Schopenhauer's primary arguments in favour of the radical idealist position. These are (in accordance with McDermid's headings):

1. The argument from immediacy
2. The argument from inconceivability
3. The argument from certainty

[41] Janaway (2002: 30) only lists four of the five arguments here considered. His discussion does not make mention of the "argument from immediacy", which is in my estimation, an extremely pertinent and compelling argument for Schopenhauer's idealism; hence I include it herein.

4. The argument from simplicity
5. The argument from the subject-object antithesis

3.6.1. The Argument from Immediacy

A convenient point of commencement is that of the so-called argument from immediacy. Essentially this argument states that the only thing of which an individual has absolute certainty is his own consciousness. The argument is clearly indebted to Descartes' famous "method of doubt" and I shall therefore utilise it in the presentation of my explanation. Schopenhauer (1974a: 4) observes that "[Descartes] was struck by the truth that we are above all restricted to our own consciousness and that the world is given to us only as [*appearance*][42] or *mental picture* [*Vorstellung*]. Through his well-known *dubito, cogito, ergo sum*[43] he tried to lay stress on the only certain thing of subjective consciousness in contrast to the problematical nature of everything else, and to express the great truth that self-consciousness is the only thing really and unconditionally *given*".

Allow me to explicate how Descartes arrives at this so-called "great truth". Following the father of modern philosophy (Descartes, 1960b: 102-103) we may observe that the objects in our dreams seem as real as those of wakefulness, consequently how can one know that the world one takes to be so real is not equally as illusory? Perhaps the sun, moon, stars, mountains, continents, oceans – in short, the entire universe – is nothing more than a figment of one's imagination? And perhaps this illusoriness extends to my own person: perhaps I am not as I imagine myself to be, that my body does not in fact exist. I can doubt the existence of all these objects, but I cannot doubt the existence of my consciousness, for it is a presupposition of my doubting: for only a conscious being has the ability to doubt (Descartes, 1960b: 108). Following Descartes, Schopenhauer (1969b: 4) maintains that "everything of which [one] has certain, sure, and hence immediate knowledge, lies within his consciousness. Beyond this consciousness, therefore, there can be no *immediate* certainty […]". It is not unreasonable to doubt that

[42] Payne uses the imprecise term "*representation*", which I have previously censured in my discussion.

[43] "I doubt, that is to say, I think, consequently I am".

objects (even one's own body) exist, but it is absurd to doubt the existence of one's consciousness – which is immediate and antecedent to all experiences, and therefore certain. Thus, the argument from immediacy may be succinctly expressed thus: "if nothing is immediately known except the subjective contents of one's own mind or consciousness, then everything else must be mediated by consciousness; but whatever is mediated by consciousness is necessarily conditioned by it, and therefore dependent on it. Consequently, physical objects cannot exist independently of mind or consciousness" (McDermid, 2012:73-74); *ergo*, radical idealism is veracious.

3.6.2. The Argument from Inconceivability

The second primary argument is that of inconceivability.[44] This argument can be succinctly expressed as the impossibility of imagining a world devoid of consciousness; for in the act of imagining such, the conscious subject is presupposed. Thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 5) states:

> "That the *objective world would exist* even if there existed no knowing being at all, naturally seems at the first onset to be sure and certain, because it can be thought in the abstract, without the contradiction that it carries within itself coming to light. But if we try to *realize* this abstract thought, in other words, to reduce it to [appearances] of perception, from which alone (like everything abstract) it can have content and truth; and if accordingly we attempt to *imagine an objective world without a knowing subject*, then we become aware that what we are imagining at that moment is in truth the opposite of what we intended, namely nothing but just the process in the intellect of a knowing being who perceives an objective world, that is to say, precisely that which we had sought to exclude. For this perceptible and real world is obviously a phenomenon of the brain; and so in the assumption that the world as such might exist independently of all brains there lies a contradiction."

I wish to observe that the argument from inconceivability is not, however, novel to Schopenhauer; for it had been propounded over a century earlier by Berkeley in his

[44] This corresponds with the first argument for idealism identified by Janaway (2002: 30) in his work *Schopenhauer: A Very Short Introduction*.

Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge (first published in 1710). Therein, part one, section six, Berkeley (2004a: 55) states:

> "Some truths there are so near and obvious to the mind, that a man need only open his eyes to see them. Such I take this important one to be, that all the choir of heaven and furniture of the Earth, in a word all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any subsistence without a mind, that their being is to be perceived or known; that consequently so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind or that of any other created spirit, they must either have no existence at all, or else subsist in the mind of some eternal spirit: it being perfectly unintelligible and involving all the absurdity of abstraction, to attribute to any single part of them an existence independent of a spirit. To be convinced of which, the reader need only reflect and try to separate in his own thoughts the being of a sensible thing from its being perceived."

According to the argument from inconceivability, therefore, the world – with its animate and inanimate objects – is inconceivable without a conscious mind because one cannot think of or imagine the world without consciousness. In other words, consciousness is already presupposed in the act of imagining and consequently, so the argument intimates, it is impossible – or inconceivable – to even imagine a world devoid of consciousness.

3.6.3. The Argument from Certainty

The argument from certainty is essentially concerned with Hume's scepticism. If one imagines the world as possessing a mind-independent existence then it becomes impossible to have any certainty regarding it. For instance, thus far in my life I have been led to the conclusion by way of experience that flames emit heat, but if the world has a real existence beyond my consciousness then I cannot be certain that heat is an essential property of flames, for it may be that somewhere in the vast universe a flame exists – or existed or will exist – which does not emit heat. Therefore, the only means by which this radical scepticism may be surmounted is to follow upon the path of Kant: we must consider the existence of the world as entirely dependent on the conscious mind – or expressed somewhat more accurately, we must regard sensuous intuitions

(time and space) and causality as emanating from consciousness which thereby stamp experience with indubitableness. In this way one acquires certainty about the world. On the other hand, if one stubbornly persists in the materialist view and maintains that the world has an existence beyond the conscious mind then he must accept the predicament of scepticism; for causal connections (as well as spatial and temporal relations) possess, according to the materialistic view, a real (mind-independent) existence, and thus – owing to the finiteness of the mind – one cannot be certain of empirical knowledge-claims. It is for this reason that Schopenhauer proposes the argument from certainty in favour of idealism as "the only viable solution to scepticism" (Janaway, 2002: 30).

3.6.4. The Argument from Simplicity

The fourth primary argument utilised by Schopenhauer in his attempt to convince readers of the truth of radical idealism is concerned with the positing of two homogenous worlds, one of which becomes redundant (Janaway, 2002: 30). Allow me to elaborate. The materialist maintains that the world has an independent-existence and this world is merely replicated in the mind (consciousness) of a subject, just as an object is reflected in a mirror. "Thus to the *first* world a *second* has been added, which, although completely separated from the first, resembles it to a nicety" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 9). This second world is a redundancy and can consequently be dispensed with. But why should one reject the objective mind-independent world in favour of the subjective mind-dependent world? Schopenhauer (1969b: 9) maintains that the subjective world has a decided advantage over the objective: for the former (as was previously discussed) possesses a certainty which the latter lacks – "it can state beforehand most minutely and accurately the full conformity to law of all the relations in that space which are possible and not yet actual; and it does not need to examine them first. It can state just as much about the course of time, as also about the relation of cause and effect which governs the changes in outer space." (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 9). For this reason Schopenhauer (ibid.) concludes that it leads to

> "[…] the conviction that that absolutely *objective* world outside the head, independent of it and *prior* to all knowledge, which we at first imagined we had conceived, was really no other than the second world already known

> *subjectively*, the world of the [appearance], and that it is this alone which we are actually capable of conceiving. Accordingly the assumption is automatically forced on us that the world, as we know it, exists only for our knowledge, and consequently in [*appearance*] alone, and not once again outside that [appearance]."

3.6.5. The Argument from the Subject-Object Antithesis

I turn now to the fifth and final argument, which Janaway (2002: 31) describes as "the one Schopenhauer most relies on", viz., the subject-object antithesis. According to Schopenhauer the most fundamental, elementary division of all cognition is that between subject and object (Cartwright, 2005: 164). As such the antithesis precedes even the principle of sufficient reason and is a crucial component in the possibility of one experiencing appearances – for every object known presupposes a knower (i.e. a subject), just as much as every subject, in order for it to be consciously cognizant, must necessarily presuppose objects (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 18).

Materialists err, Schopenhauer (1969b: 14) claims, by neglecting the subject and starting from the object: they thus erroneously maintain that "the world is matter" or that "matter alone positively exists" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 14); as a consequence thereof they are led to the view that matter persists even without the existence of sentient beings; which, Schopenhauer (1969b: 12) claims, "it is impossible even to conceive". It will be recalled, however, that every object presupposes a conscious subject; for every individual only knows the objects of experience in so far as they appear in his mind; but as to the actual existence of such objects of perception one must ultimately remain ignorant: for perhaps the objects one considers so real are nothing more than fleeting illusions conjured up by the mind like a dream without any external corroboration. Materialism is therefore false, in so far as it is founded upon an uncertain principle, viz., "matter alone positively exists". Radical idealism, in contrast, is correct in so far as it commences from that which is immediately known, and known moreover with certainty, viz., the subjective standpoint, i.e. consciousness. But the subjective standpoint does not – and cannot – prove the actual existence of the objects of perception: it can solely avow perceptions of external (and internal) objects to be

appearances in the mind. In this way Schopenhauer (1969b: 14-15) argues in favour of radical idealism by way of the subject-object antithesis.

3.7. A Discussion on Three Different Varieties of Idealism

For the moment, I shall postpone my criticism of Schopenhauer's five primary arguments in favour of the radical idealist position; for this is merely a detailed outline of Schopenhauer's philosophy and a criticism thereof at this point in my discussion will inevitably vitiate my intended presentation. For the present, however, I wish to make a detailed comparison of three varieties of idealism, viz., Berkeleyan, Kantian and Schopenhauerian, in order to illustrate the similarities and dissimilarities between the three types. I maintain that this will facilitate a better understanding of my criticism of Schopenhauer's radical idealism and it will also make clear that, unlike Schopenhauer (1969a: 435-436), I esteem, in contradistinction to the first, the second edition of Kant's *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, in which Kant (B275) attempts to distance himself from radical (Berkeleyan) idealism (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 435).

Let us commence with the oldest form of idealism, viz., the Berkeleyan variety, which I have elsewhere referred to as "radical idealism".[45] In two of his principal works, viz., *The Principles of Human Knowledge* and *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, Berkeley sought to propound his doctrine of *immaterialism.* This term, although it is no longer generally used in connection with his philosophy, is, in my estimation, extremely illuminating, for it intimates the notion that Berkeley rejected the actuality of all matter (Collinson and Plant, 2006: 115) – he was consequently a radical idealist *par excellence*. However, it must be borne in mind that idealism is not necessarily committed to the impossibility of the existence of matter; on the contrary, in the case of Kantian idealism, for instance, it leaves the question of the actual existence of material objects a mystery and is in the strictest sense simply the view that the world of perception and experience (appearances) exists in the perceiving mind. Thus, it will be beneficial to the discussion to define the notions of idealism and immaterialism. The notion of idealism with which we are at present concerned may be

[45] Cf. 3.4 and 7.8 herein, et al.

succinctly defined as "the doctrine that the *idea* or the *thought* has priority to *reality* or existence" (Grooten and Steenbergen, 1972: 200), in other words philosophical idealism is the doctrine that the world one experiences exists solely in a perceiving mind. Immaterialism, on the other hand, is the view "that no material things exist, but only spirits with their spiritual ideas" (Grooten and Steenbergen, 1972: 200); in other words, "there is no purely material, or mind-independent reality" (Woolhouse, 2004: 4). We may observe here that although idealism can exist independently of immaterialism, the latter presupposes the former and cannot therefore be maintained independently thereof. Now due to the fact that Berkeley denies the existence of matter (Collinson and Plant, 2006: 115) it follows that he is an idealist in the most extreme sense, i.e. Berkeley (2004a: 54) maintains that the world exists solely in the mind without any external or material object grounding the perceptions or appearances one experiences. It is for this reason that I refer to the Berkeleyan form of idealism as *radical idealism* and contrast it with *partial idealism*, which does not reject the possibility of a material object grounding one's perceptions or appearances.

In order to comprehend Berkeley's doctrine, viz., that all objects are merely appearances in a perceiving mind – that, in other words, for something to exist it must be perceived – *esse est percipi* (Berkeley, 2004a: 54) – mention must be made of John Locke's (2004: 135) distinction between primary and secondary qualities. For it is essentially in response to Locke that Berkeley arrives at this view (Collinson and Plant, 2006: 117) which is undoubtedly his greatest philosophical achievement and the one for which he is remembered by posterity. As my intention in this section is not to subject the Berkeleyan philosophy to a rigorous critique I shall not enter into the details thereof, but merely sketch the most general outline in order to make perspicuous to readers the essential and fundamental difference between Berkeleyan idealism and my construal of the Kantian variety, thereby attaining my primary aim, viz., illustrating the relation of both forms of idealism (radical and transcendental) to the Schopenhauerian variety thereof.

Locke (2004: 135-136) maintains that some qualities attributable to objects are mind-dependent, whereas others are mind-independent – those of the former sort he characterises as *secondary qualities*, whereas the latter are said to be primary, in so far as they are considered *essential* attributes of an object and therefore possess an absolute existence independently of all perception. According to Locke (2004: 135) extension,

motion, number, figure and solidity are five such primary qualities. In contrast, secondary qualities are *inessential* properties of objects, contributed to the perception of an object by the perceiving mind; these include the qualities of sound, taste and scent (Locke, 2004: 135). For the sake of comprehension Locke's position can be expressed in Kantian terms in the following manner: the secondary qualities are akin to the world of appearance, whereas the primary attributes are equivalent to the *Ding-an-sich*. Thus the real, mind-independent world for Locke is one inhabited by numerous colourless, scentless, tasteless *objects*. Locke, it may be said, is a *partial* idealist in so far as he holds secondary qualities to be entirely mind-dependent; but he still retains the existence of a real, albeit dreary, material world. It was Berkeley (2004a: 54) who made the leap from partial to radical idealism, for although he does not dispute the fact that secondary qualities are mind-dependent, he does reject Locke's (2004: 135) claim that the primary qualities exist independently of all perception. To this end Berkeley (2004a: 56) advances the "inseparability argument"[46] which ultimately establishes the radical idealist claim that objects (which include both primary and secondary qualities) exist solely in the mind, as perceptions of a perceiver:

> "They who assert that figure, motion, and the rest of the primary or original qualities do exist without the mind, in unthinking substances, do at the same time acknowledge that colours, sounds, heat, cold, and such like secondary qualities, do not, which they tell us are sensations existing in the mind alone, that depend on and are occasioned by the different size, texture and motion of the minute particles of matter. This they take for an undoubted truth, which they can demonstrate beyond all exception. Now if it be certain, that those original qualities are inseparably united with the other sensible qualities, and not, even in thought, capable of being abstracted from them, it plainly follows that they exist only in the mind. But I desire anyone to reflect and try, whether he can by any abstraction of thought, conceive the extension and motion of a body, without all other sensible qualities. For my own part, I see evidently that it is not in my power to frame an idea of a body extended and moved, but I must also give it some colour or other sensible quality which is acknowledged to exist only in the mind. In short, extension, figure, and motion, abstracted

[46] I refer to the argument as one of "inseparability" because it seeks to illustrate that one cannot conceive primary qualities devoid of secondary attributes, and *vice versa*.

> from all other qualities, are inconceivable. Where therefore the other sensible qualities are, there must these be also, that is, in the mind and nowhere else."

I shall not attempt to discuss the veracity of this argument, suffice it to say that it is not impervious to criticism. However, for the incredulous reader I shall offer a more tangible proof of the mind-dependentness of the primary qualities which Locke (2004: 135) took to be absolutely real. To that end let us consider a wooden table. In essence Locke's theory amounts to the following: the colour and scent of a wooden table, as well as the sound it emits when I rap my knuckles upon its surface, exist only in so far as a sentient perceiver is present: for these secondary qualities are not essential to the table but exist only in my (or some other) mind as a result of the interaction between conscious perception and the primary qualities the table possesses. The mind-dependency of secondary qualities is perhaps most conspicuous with regard to colour. For suppose I observe the table under a bright light: I may see its hue as a light brown as opposed to the mahogany colour I perceive under darker conditions. Or, the colour I perceive from my vantage point may appear different to that of the colour from another position. Colour, therefore, cannot be an objective (i.e. primary) attribute of objects. But, if we consider the matter in more depth we may even dispute the mind-independentness of the so-called primary qualities: for depending on where I stand in relation to the wooden table it may appear rectangular, square or even triangular; depending on where and how I touch it, it may feel at one moment course and hard, the next smooth and soft. In this way we may arrive at the view that even the primary qualities of objects are *mind-dependent*; and if we concede this point then we have – perhaps unwittingly – passed into the radical idealist position.

But as I mentioned at the outset of this discussion, Berkeleyan idealism is unique in so far as it dispenses with the material object as a grounding or a foundation for the appearances one perceives. In other words, Berkeley rejects the view that some mysterious *material* object causes the sensations and perceptions one perceives (Collinson and Plant, 2006: 115). The reason for this has already been mentioned in connection with the arguments propounded by Schopenhauer in favour of idealism, viz., the fact that every object is necessarily an object for a subject and it is therefore impossible to imagine a mind-independent world, for the act of imagining presupposes the mind; consequently "the absolute existence of unthinking things are words without a meaning, or which include a contradiction" (Berkeley, 2004a: 61). But for the purpose

of my exposition I wish to emphasise that Berkeleyan idealism is a radical form thereof due to the fact that it explicitly rejects the existence of material objects. Therefore, radical idealism can be defined as a fusion of idealism and immaterialism. There are, of course, numerous difficulties with this view. Two of which are extremely significant to the development of the exposition, viz., (i) how are genuine sensations caused without an external entity? And (ii) how do objects continue to exist, even when unperceived by a finite mind? Berkeley (2004a: 84-87) takes the possibility of real sensations and the continued existence of unperceived objects to be indicative of an omniscient mind; i.e. God is said to produce real sensations in the mind of a perceiver and to cause objects to subsist even when unperceived. So much then for Berkeleyan Idealism.

The second form of idealism I wish to consider at some length is that of the Kantian variety, viz., transcendental idealism. In order to sufficiently contrast it with the Berkeleyan sort, let us commence this discussion with a definition of the term: transcendental idealism may be succinctly defined as the study of the cognitive preconditions for any possible experience, i.e. the view that the mind, of whatever substance it may ultimately be – (or, more precisely, the synthetic *a priori* mechanisms therein) assist in the construction of experience (appearances) (Grooten and Steenbergen, 1972: 442-443). I shall briefly recapitulate the Kantian position for the sake of the discussion: it will be remembered that Kant (1950: 14-19) identified a third type of knowledge, viz., synthetic *a priori* knowledge, as possessing both universal certainty and empirical applicability. In this way Kant maintains that raw sensations come into contact with these synthetic *a priori* mechanisms of the mind, thereby transforming unintelligible sensory data into meaningful perceptions. As such, the world is (at least partially) mind-dependent and Kant is evidently an idealist of sorts. The view that the mind assists in the construction of appearances or experience leads to what Schopenhauer (1969a: 417) refers to as "Kant's greatest merit", viz., the distinction between appearances and *things-in-themselves.*[47] Here we discern the first

[47] I intentionally use the word "things" as opposed to "thing" here, because it seems to me that one must comprehend Kant as stating that the objects as they are in-themselves *cause* sensations which, once they come into contact with the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind, are transformed into intelligible perceptions (appearances). It is solely within the Schopenhauerian

major distinction between the Berkeleyan and Kantian varieties of idealism: for Berkeley the mind does not assist in the construction of the appearances one perceives, whereas Kant's idealism is evidently committed to the view that the mind is an essential ingredient in the production thereof. Thus, Berkeley's idealism does not lead to the postulation of two distinct worlds, whereas Kant's does (Scruton, 2001: 55). Nonetheless, both are philosophical idealists in so far as they maintain that the world is, to some extent in the case of Kant, mind-dependent. However, I termed Berkeley's idealism *radical* in so far as it rejects the actual, mind-independent existence of material objects. But the status of the material object is not at all perspicuous in Kantian idealism; for an extremely contentious aspect of Kant's thought is his attitude towards the material object: in short, does Kant maintain that the material object is mind-independent or, like Berkeley, does he consider appearances to be without any material foundation?

It is possible to find textual corroborations for both positions in the *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*; but, in the second edition of the work Kant (B275) explicitly and emphatically attempted to distance himself from Berkeleyan, i.e. radical, idealism (cf. the section entitled *Refutation of Idealism*); which essentially portends that he did not wish to deny the reality of material objects and thus avow a form of immaterialism. Thus, in the *Prolegomena*, published only two years after the first edition of the *Kritik* and intended as an introductory text thereto, Kant (1950: 36) states:

> "[Radical] idealism consists in the assertion that there are none but thinking beings, all other things which we think are perceived in intuition, being nothing but representations in the thinking beings, to which no object external to them in fact corresponds. *I, on the contrary, say that things as objects of our senses existing outside us are given, but we know nothing of what they may be in themselves, knowing only their appearances, that is representations which they cause in us by affecting our senses*. Consequently I grant by all means that there are bodies without us, that is, things which, though quite unknown to us as to what they are in themselves, we yet know by the representations which their influence on our sensibility procures us. These representations we call

philosophy that it is erroneous to refer to the essence of the world as a plurality, and this is due to the fact that the world as it is in-itself is both atemporal and aspatial and consequently that it must be a unity, hence a singular *Ding-an-sich* (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 113).

> 'bodies', a term signifying merely the appearance of the thing which is unknown to us, but not therefore less actual. Can this be termed [radical] idealism? It is the very contrary."

It is thus evident that Kant emphatically wishes to distance himself from the view that there are no material objects, and, so it seems to me, for good reason. It will be remembered that the mind constructs a *Vorstellung* – an appearance – by way of the synthetic *a priori* mechanisms coming into contact with sensations. Sensations are in-themselves unintelligible, i.e. raw data, which are transformed into perceptions by the forms of intuition (space and time) and the categories (causality, accident, substance, et al.). Now, if Kant had denied the existence of mind-independent objects he would not have been able to speak meaningfully of genuine sensations – for without a mind-independent world where would those sensations originate? But let us, for the sake of illustrating the point I am attempting to make, imagine that Kant had been a radical idealist, advocating the immaterialism of Berkeley. In such a case the only possible source of genuine sensations would be from the mind of another perceptible being. For, as mentioned, if all sensations originate within the mind and none refer to an externally real object then it becomes impossible to distinguish reality from illusion; thus, the only solution to this serious problem is to argue that real sensations must originate from another mind.[48] In this way one could potentially distinguish illusion from reality, i.e., the latter must be said to originate from other minds, while the former from one's own mind. But if a real object were to originate from another finite mind then it would exist only for as long as that mind entertains it; but such a theory contradicts experience for

[48] However, I observe that a serious difficulty arises on this interpretation; for if one concurs with my view that reality can be distinguished from illusion solely by way of an externally real entity to which such perceptions refer, then although immaterial perceptions which emanate from another mind may be considered to be real to the individual perceiving those immaterial objects, these same entities must be considered illusions in the mind of the being in whom they originate. In connection with Berkeley's philosophy, then, the immaterial objects humans take to be real (given that they originate within the mind of God) are in fact mere illusions to God, in so far as they originate within His supposedly "infinite mind", and hence do not correspond to any externally real objects. Thus, in the last analysis, everything must ultimately be an illusion on the radical idealist account. I note that this accords with Schopenhauer's (1969a: 18) view that "life is a long dream".

there is evidently continuity in the existence of objects, even those which have not been perceived for millennia such as buried ancient relics and the most distant planets and stars which have only recently been detected by scientists. The only solution if one insists on denying the existence of matter, therefore, is to postulate an infinite perception, thereby permitting the continuation of objects unperceived by finite minds. But such a solution is not accessible to Kant, for in the first *Kritik* he concludes that the existence of God cannot be known with certainty (Scruton, 2001: 66-68); hence it seems unlikely that he would attempt to argue for Berkeley's immaterialist view, which is necessarily committed to the existence of an omniscient being. It seems that Schopenhauer did not realise the gravity of this difficulty; indeed, as will become evident in due course, the radical idealist position is in many respects at variance with Schopenhauer's teaching which has its foundations in the Kantian philosophy. As a consequence of these observations I conclude that Kant – contrary to Schopenhauer's view which I shall shortly discuss – was not a radical idealist, for he does not reject the existence of the material object; and for good reason.

Here, therefore, we discover what is perhaps the fundamental distinction between Berkeleyan idealism and transcendental idealism: the former rejects the existence of a mind-independent material world, whereas the latter does not but endeavours rather to show that the world one knows is partially constructed by the mind and is therefore not identical to reality as it is in-itself (Kant, 1950: 36). The extent of this divergence between the real and the ideal is the ultimate mystery of the Kantian philosophy; for reality might be extremely similar, identical or radically at variance with the world one perceives. Nonetheless, this is a question which unfortunately remains unanswerable by the finite human mind, for the world as it is in-itself can be thought of solely in the negative sense, i.e. as existing – no positive attributes can be ascribed to it (Scruton, 2001: 56). So it may be that the world as it is in-itself is vastly dissimilar to the way in which we perceive it – as, of course, Schopenhauer (1969a: 110) imagined it to be – or it may be that the world as it is in-itself accords extremely closely with the way in which we perceive it. Ultimately, we cannot know either one way or the other, according to my interpretation of Kant's philosophy in the *Kritik*. But I must observe, as I have previously, that even though one cannot know with any degree of certainty what the world is like in-itself, the fact that the phenomenal world presents itself to us as it does offers a clue into the nature of ultimate reality, in so far as it intimates that it must

contain within itself the grounds for this phenomenal variation. I shall return to this significant point shortly.

Let us now turn to a consideration of Schopenhauer's interpretation of transcendental idealism. He (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 434-435) is insistent on construing Kant's idealism in radical, i.e., Berkeleyan, terms – contrary to Kant's explicit assertions in the second edition of the *Kritik* (B275) and the *Prolegomena* (1950:36) – and he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 434-435) maintains that his predecessor had vitiated his masterpiece thereby:

> "In my first edition [to *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 1819], I explained Kant's avoidance of this Berkeleyan principle as resulting from a visible fear of decided idealism, whereas, on the other hand, I found this distinctly expressed in many passages of the [*Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*], and accordingly accused Kant of contradicting himself. And this reproach was well founded, in so far as the [*Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*] was at that time known to me only in its second edition, or in the five subsequent editions printed from it. Now when later I read Kant's principal work in the first edition, which had already become scarce, I saw, to my great joy, all those contradictions disappear. I found that, although Kant does not use the formula 'No object without a subject', he nevertheless, with just as much emphasis as do Berkeley and I, declares the external world lying before us in space and time to be mere [appearance] of the subject that knows it. Thus, for example, he says there (p. 383) without reserve: 'If I take away the thinking subject, the whole material world must cease to exist, as it is nothing but the phenomenon in the sensibility of our subject, and a species of its [appearances]'. However, the whole passage from p.348 to p.392, in which Kant expounds his decided idealism with great beauty and clarity, was suppressed by him in the second edition. On the other hand, he introduced a number of remarks that controverted it. In this way, the text of the [*Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*], as it was in circulation from the year 1787 to 1838,[49] became disfigured and spoilt; it was a self-contradictory book,

[49] In 1838 Karl Rosenkranz and Friedrich Wilhelm Schubert released an edition of Kant's collected works in which the first edition of the *Kritik* was reprinted; this was the first reprinting of the first edition of the work since 1781. Unbeknown to many, the editors' decision to reprint the first edition of the *Kritik* was in fact due to Schopenhauer's insistence (Cartwright, 2010: 426). Schopenhauer had written to Rosenkranz explaining the differences between the first and

> whose sense therefore could not be thoroughly clear and comprehensible to anyone […] Let no one imagine he knows the [*Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*], and has a clear conception of Kant's teaching, if he has read only the second or one of the subsequent editions. This is absolutely impossible; for he has read only a mutilated, spoilt, and, to a certain extent ungenuine text. It is my duty to state this here emphatically, as a warning to everyone."

Now it seems to me that Schopenhauer's interpretation of his mentor's idealism must be construed as a denial of the existence of mind-independent material objects. In other words, Schopenhauer would like Kant to be understood as a radical idealist in the Berkeleyan sense, i.e. as an *immaterialist*. However, a great difficulty arises on such an interpretation, for if one is committed to the view that perceptions (appearances) are a product of sensations interacting with the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind how is one to account for the sensations? The provenience of sensations must be sought in something external, i.e. something "out there" must produce the raw, unintelligible jumble of data which the mind receives; for only thus can illusion be distinguished from reality. But moreover, and equally as significant, I cannot desist from stating once again that if the existence of numerous mind-independent material objects is denied then it becomes extremely difficult to account for the appearance of multifarious objects in the phenomenal world. If we follow Schopenhauer (1969a: 113), and construe the world as it is in-itself to be a unity, then why should the mind take a homogeneous entity and transform it into an array of objects, some of which are unpleasant and life-threatening? What could explicate the mind's construction of, for instance, harrowing diseases, tyrants and predatory animals? In contradistinction to the Schopenhauerian thesis, I

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subsequent editions of the *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft* and urged him to include the first, "unmutilated", edition of the work therein (Cartwright, 2010: 425). Furthermore, Schopenhauer suggested that the editors indicate the various omissions and additions to the second and subsequent editions of the work by way of an appendix (Cartwright, 2010: 426). As Cartwright (2010: 426) notes: "Rosenkranz accepted Schopenhauer's advice and published the first [*Kritik*] in its first edition, relegating to an appendix the additions and variants of the second – a form in which the book would endure for years". Nowadays this has become a standard practice and university students of the Kantian philosophy unwittingly follow Schopenhauer's advice by studying translations of the *Kritik* which include material from both editions (differentiated as the "A-text" and "B-text" respectively).

argue that the *Ding-an-sich* must contain within itself characteristic elements, by which I mean fundamental attributes, which, in conjunction with the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind, produce particular appearances. It is only if we consider the *Ding-an-sich* as containing such characteristic elements within itself that we can explicate the plethora of objects (appearances) found throughout the universe. But then it would be more correct to speak of *things-in-themselves* as opposed to the misleading "thing-in-itself". If, however, my interpretation is correct it will necessarily lead to an objective view of time, space (the *principium individuationis*) and the law of causality; for my interpretation requires the individuation of objects in-themselves and the postulation of a causal-bond between these objects and the sensations produced in the mind/body of the perceiver.

However, I wish to enquire as to Schopenhauer's motivations for interpreting the Kantian philosophy in such a way, and to offer a conjecture as to a possible cause thereof. Schopenhauer (1969b: 463) held that death was the veritable inspiration for genuine philosophical wonder and speculation and he claims, further, that the only genuine consolation for death is a doctrine of athanasia (Cartwright, 2005: 36). Now if we take these remarks seriously, then it seems to me that Schopenhauer was so emphatic upon interpreting Kant as a radical idealist in order to propound a unique doctrine of immortality. For, as will become apparent in due course, Schopenhauer's doctrine of athanasia is founded upon the radical idealist dichotomisation between the world of appearances on the one hand and the *Ding-an-sich* on the other. The former realm, in which one exists as a spatially-temporal creature, is transitory and illusory, whereas the latter sphere, to which one's essence belongs, is unchanging and eternal. Thus, it may be the case that one of Schopenhauer's primary motivations for being emphatically committed to the radical idealist interpretation of transcendental idealism was his desire to propound a consoling doctrine of athanasia. It is for this reason that in the second section on "The World as Appearance" I subject Schopenhauer's idealism to such intense scrutiny; for by illustrating the untenability thereof I maintain that I shall simultaneously vitiate the foundation upon which Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia is based.

In the subsequent discussion what follows has largely been anticipated; however, I shall now present Schopenhauer's form of idealism *ab ovo* in the hope of illustrating its

points of convergence and divergence from the two forms of idealism previously considered.

It may come as a surprise to some that Schopenhauer, although admittedly an heir of the Kantian philosophy, must be classed in the same category as that of Berkeley, viz., as a radical idealist. This is due to Schopenhauer's insistence on the fact that perception and experience are wholly mind-dependent and that the world in-itself does not, in the least, correspond with the world as it appears to a conscious mind; that it is, in fact, non-material. However, we must acknowledge, that although Schopenhauer is a radical idealist his idealism differs to that of Berkeley in significant respects. Firstly, Schopenhauer was an avowed and unapologetic atheist (Edwards, 2009: 173), consequently he does not, like Berkeley, have recourse to an omniscient deity in his explanation of the continued existence of the world and the existence of genuine sensations. Secondly, and again in contradistinction to Berkeley, Schopenhauer did not entirely reject the notion of an external entity as the source of one's sensations. The Kantian dichotomisation between appearances and the *Ding-an-sich* allows Schopenhauer to maintain that sensations originate from the latter source, although he never, to my knowledge, explicitly makes this assertion. Indeed, I observe that Schopenhauer's atheism necessarily leads him to base his idealism on a foundation other than that of the existence of God, viz., on the *Ding-an-sich*. Where Berkeley posits God as the ultimate source of appearances, Schopenhauer must necessarily posit the *Ding-an-sich*. Thus, Schopenhauer's idealism lies midway between that of the Berkeleyan and Kantian varieties, if I may be permitted to express it thus. Schopenhauer rejects both the existence of God and a mind-independent material object as the source of one's sensations, and instead he must be construed as postulating the existence of an immaterial, i.e., metaphysical, substance as the source thereof. In a strange way Schopenhauer's idealism is therefore a fusion of the Berkeleyan and Kantian varieties: Kant's *Ding-an-sich* is said to be an immaterial "spiritual" substance; but it is not – and I wish to emphasise this point – denied to be extant. In due course we shall positively identify this immaterial substance, but for the moment I wish only to emphasise the way in which Schopenhauer's idealism accords with and diverges from the Berkeleyan and Kantian varieties.

I have not read any English secondary literature which attempts to compare the three varieties of idealism as I am doing here. I conjecture that this may be due to a difficulty

inherent to the Schopenhauerian form of idealism and one we have already touched upon; viz., the issue of causality. Schopenhauer (1969a: 436) excoriates Kant for applying the law of causality beyond its circumscribed realm, i.e. by maintaining that the *Ding-an-sich* is the *cause* of one's sensations. If causality is, as Kant declared, an *a priori* category then it cannot subsist in the realm of the *Ding-an-sich*. In other words, the causal law cannot be applied beyond the mind, and in declaring the material object to be the source or cause of sensations one is guilty of just such an offence. For this reason, Schopenhauer attempts to evade this difficulty by way of the correlativity thesis and semantics. As discussed, Schopenhauer (1969a: 14) argues that the correlativity thesis is the most fundamental mechanism of the mind, thus every subject necessarily presupposes an object and *vice versa*. In this way Schopenhauer believes he has avoided the difficulty as to how the *Ding-an-sich* can be said to cause sensations. On other occasions, Schopenhauer (1969a: 130, 131, 141, et al.) merely speaks of the *Ding-an-sich* as "manifesting" or "objectifying" itself into the phenomenal world. However, this is to my mind merely a disguised form and fanciful way of stating the obvious. For if we closely attend to the matter we can discern what is really meant by such empty phrases as "objectification" or "manifestation"; i.e., the *Ding-an-sich* is the source of sensations, which are transformed, when they come into contact with the *a priori* mechanisms in the mind, into sensible perceptions. To say that the *Ding-an-sich* "manifests" or "objectifies" itself as particular appearances is to intentionally obscure the process whereby sensations are transformed into perceptions. Schopenhauer cannot, despite his ingenious attempt, evade this difficulty. Just as in the Berkeleyan philosophy God is the source or cause of objects, so too, in the Kantian and Schopenhauerian philosophies is there a cause and source of sensations, but this is more complicated in so far as there are in the latter philosophies two elements necessary for the production of perceptible objects: one source lies within the mind itself, as that which confers order and sense (meaning) onto an unintelligible assortment of sensations; the other lies within the world in-itself, i.e. the *Ding-an-sich*. Thus, the provenience of sensations must be the *Ding-an-sich*, problematical as this may be to both Kant and Schopenhauer who deny a mind-independent form of the causal law.[50]

[50] Kant and Schopenhauer failed to consider the possibility of what is nowadays referred to as "the neglected alternative", viz., that causality may be a feature of the world as it is in-itself.

In concluding this rather abstruse discussion I wish to offer a few more pertinent remarks on the topic in the hope of rendering it more intelligible. The most significant observation derivable from our discussion is the observation that, on a transcendental idealist account, the *things-in-themselves* must ultimately contribute something to perception. Indeed, this seems to me the most credible interpretation of Kant's philosophy, for it is able to explicate the existence of unpleasant and life-threatening objects; for the things-in-themselves possess characteristic attributes which contribute to their appearances. But, if we deny the mind-independent material existence of the world in-itself and wish to persist with the radical idealist claim that the world is solely a fabrication of one's mind then we are at a loss to explicate the existence of innumerable unpleasant objects and scenarios. For what motivation could the mind possess to portray to itself harrowing objects and scenes? If the source of sensations is a unitary *Ding-an-sich* (as is the case on Schopenhauer's (1969a: 113) account) then what motivations could the mind possibly possess to produce multifarious perceptions (appearances), some of which are disagreeable and even life-threatening?[51] That the

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However, the possibility of distinguishing the real from illusion seems to intimate the existence of a causal connection between sensations and the object in-itself which produces them. In this sense, then, we can dichotomise between two types of causality: a subjective and an objective. Of the former, one may be said to possess absolute knowledge and can speak with certainty of it. The latter, however, cannot be known with any degree of certainty and it may or may not correlate with subjective causality. Now if such an objective causality is permitted then it is not incoherent to speak of the *Ding-an-sich* as *causing* sensations. But it must be borne in mind that this objective causality is not *a priori* or *a posteriori* and consequently cannot be known to exist; it can only be postulated as possibly extant as an explicative device. In the second section on idealism I shall return to the problem of objective causality.

[51] The recourse to Platonic Ideas in an attempt to dispense with this difficulty seems to me utterly inefficient because it shifts the difficulty from the mind to the *Ding-an-sich*, without actually resolving it. In section 25 of the second book of the first volume of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* Schopenhauer (1969a: 127-130) introduces the concept of the Platonic Ideas, which are to be construed as perfect prototypes of the imperfect appearances (ectypes) found in the world. However, that the *Ding-an-sich* should "manifest" itself as numerous Platonic Ideas does not solve the problem initially posed: we are then left wondering as to the *Ding-an-sich's* motivations for bringing such Platonic Ideas into existence, and thus I stated that the matter is not resolved by way of this postulation, but merely shifted; just as a man attempts to

Ding-an-sich is, on Schopenhauer's (1969a: 113) account, said to be a unity precludes it from possessing characteristic elements which could explicate the multitude of appearances. This is a difficulty which is no less problematic to the Berkeleyan idealist than to the Schopenhauerian idealist. For in the case of Berkeley's idealism – based as it is on the existence of a God with particular attributes – what justifiable reason could a benevolent, omniscient, omnipotent being possess for allowing the appearance of dreadful objects and scenes? It seems to me that were the Berkeleyan philosophy veracious we should perceive nothing but agreeable objects and scenarios. Experience, however, reveals the contrary: for we are often confronted with the most harrowing situations: dangerous objects, whether they be infinitesimally small such as bacteria and viruses or monumentally formidable such as volcanoes or large predatory animals, which threaten the continuation of our existence.

Now I maintain that even if one attempted to dispense with God and yet persist with radical idealism the problem is no less serious. For the harrowing images must be thought to originate from within the individual. As in the case of nightmares, the frightening incidents and objects experienced are conjured up by the unconscious mind and are consequently meaningful and purposive; in other words, a sagacious psychologist can determine the unconscious motives for the appearance of nightmares. But such a psychological explanation cannot be posited as the cause of the harrowing scenes one experiences in the case of idealism: for instance, one cannot cogently maintain that an ophidiophobic individual finds himself trapped in a pit of serpents because of his fear thereof. Thus, we must enquire once again as to the cause of the manifold perceptions we experience, for it is evident that they cannot originate entirely within the mind of the perceiver (for then they are mere illusions). It seems to me that both the Berkeleyan and Schopenhauerian forms of idealism fail to explicate why our minds or that of an omniscient, omnipotent, benevolent deity should conjure up at one moment a loving, docile pet and on another occasion a ferocious predator which threatens to destroy us. For if one persists in the view that perceptions are entirely and *in toto* the product of a conscious mind then he must necessarily be able to offer a cogent explication thereof; but I confess that I cannot discover a satisfying answer to

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evade an accusation of guilt by shifting the blame on to someone else he is intimately associated with.

this phenomenon in either Berkeley's or Schopenhauer's philosophical systems. The only cogent explanation I can posit is that there is something *inherent* in the object as *Ding-an-sich* which causes such variation in perceptions, for such variety cannot be attributed to the active mind or to an all-powerful benevolent God alone. This I take to be the correct interpretation of the Kantian philosophy and I consequently exempt it from the criticism here propounded. However, it must be stated that if the things-in-themselves are accorded a material mind-independent existence then one cannot advocate radical idealism. Consequently, in the second section on idealism, I shall argue in favour of what I term "partial idealism".

The above observation, viz., that there must be something inherent to the objects (i.e. in-themselves) which (partly) determine their appearances, inevitably leads to a certain conclusion, viz., that the *Ding-an-sich* is inherently multifarious. Although I do not wish to anticipate and vitiate the development of Schopenhauer's argument, I must acknowledge that contrary to his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 113) claim the *Ding-an-sich* cannot be considered as a unity and therefore identical in every object. For the postulation of such a notion immediately raises the difficulty as to how the multiplicity of heterogeneous objects is possible. For as we have seen, it cannot be cogently argued that the mind alone is responsible for the existence of a world of manifold (often disagreeable) objects. In contradistinction to the Schopenhauerian view I affirm that one should speak of *things-in-themselves* as opposed to the singular *Ding-an-sich*, thus alluding to the fact that the world as it is in-itself necessarily contributes in an active way to the existence of perceptible objects. I would also like to observe that my position seems to be in accordance with Kant's as stated in the second edition of the *Kritik* (1787) and in the *Prolegomena* (1783). For in those works Kant attempts to distance himself from Berkeleyan idealism because, I conjecture, he does not wish to deny the existence of the material object (cf. "Remark Two" in Part One of the *Prolegomena* (pg. 36-37) and "*Refutation of Idealism*" in the second edition of the *Kritik* B275), which he correctly acknowledges as an essential element in the production of perceptions. I reiterate that it is only if we conceive of the *Ding-an-sich* as a material object possessing inherently diverse qualities that we can explicate the phenomenon of manifold appearances, some of which are threatening and dangerous to our very existence.

The abovementioned discussion also affords an ample opportunity to return to the controversy surrounding the rendering of the German word "*Vorstellung*" into English. As the *Ding-an-sich* is considered by Schopenhauer to be atemporal and aspatial it cannot correspond to the world of appearances and consequently I have avoided the word "representation", which seems to suggest a similarity between the two. For instance, the term "representation" may be used in connection with the pictorial arts, as when an artist paints a tree: we say, then, that the painted tree is a depiction or *representation* of the actual tree and in so doing we intimate a similarity between the real object and its pictorial representation. However, no such similarity may be said to exist between the world of appearances and the world as it is in-itself, which is said by Schopenhauer (1969a:110) to be *toto genere* different therefrom. For this reason I emphatically insist on the rejection of the world "representation" as an acceptable rendering of the German term "*Vorstellung"* in Schopenhauer's philosophy, and I have consequently spoken solely of appearances in connection with *Vorstellungen*.

3.8. Concluding Remarks

In concluding this section we may succinctly express Schopenhauer's view thus: the principle of sufficient reason of becoming (*principium fiendi*) along with the principle of sufficient reason of being (*principium essendi*), given that they are *a priori* and hence necessary preconditions for perception, work in unison to construct the perceptible world by transforming raw, unintelligible data into meaningful appearances. In this way Schopenhauer is (1969a: 3) able to state that the experienceable world is essentially a product of cognition. But, as was discussed at length, in order to distinguish illusion from reality it is necessary to postulate the existence of something "out there" *causing* the sensations one experiences. Consequently, as Schopenhauer (1969a: 98-99) states,

> "We want to know the significance of those [appearances]; we ask whether this world is nothing more than [appearance]. In that case, it would inevitably pass by us like an empty dream, or a ghostly vision not worth our consideration. Or we ask whether it is something else, something in addition, and if so what that something is." (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 98-99).

But, whatever that mysterious something which causes sensations is, one thing is certain, viz., that that ulterior world must necessarily be *toto genere* different (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 113) to the world of perception (appearances) because it lies outside the province of the correlativity thesis and the principle of sufficient reason (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 99). As mentioned, Kant referred to the realm of sensory data as that which can only be conceived of in a *negative* sense, i.e. one can only affirm that a mind-independent world (*Ding-an-sich*) exists; it can solely be thought of but never positively known or characterised (Scruton, 2001: 56). On this view, the world as it is in-itself could be entirely identical to the world we perceive or it could be vastly dissimilar. But such a question is – at least for Kant – utterly impervious to human investigation and thus the Kantian philosophy has an element of mysteriousness to it. As we shall see in the subsequent section, Schopenhauer (1969a: 99-100) maintains that, in opposition to Kant's teaching, there is a way in which knowledge of the essence of the world may be attained. We shall now turn to Schopenhauer's attempt to positively identify this mind-independent world.

4. The World as Will: First Part

Schopenhauer (1969a: 99-100) proceeds to positively identify the essence of the world, but in order to do so he cannot travel upon the path of perception utilising the principle of sufficient reason, which will inevitably lead only to knowledge of appearances. He must consequently search for the essence of this mind-independent world by some other means, and he (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 195) therefore attempts to discover it by way of *introspection*. The motivation for this seemingly odd method of philosophizing is to be found in the fact that every individual is, like all other phenomenal objects, a manifestation of the *Ding-an-sich*; one's body is the only object in the world of which one has a *dual* knowledge[52] – outer knowledge of it is an object among manifold other objects, but also, and more significantly, an inner knowledge of it, which is entirely unique (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 99). Hence that which stands before the individual as mysterious as the sphinx (i.e., the world at large) can be best comprehend by way of that which is known more intimately than any other object (i.e., the body). It is primarily for this reason, as Cartwright notes (2005: 15), that Schopenhauer has been called "the philosopher of the body". As Schopenhauer (1969b: 195) explicates in his picturesque style:

> "[…] A way *from within* stands open to us to that real inner nature of things to which we cannot penetrate *from without*. It is, so to speak, a subterranean passage, a secret alliance, which, as if by treachery, places us all at once in the fortress that could not be taken by attack from without. Precisely as such, the [*Ding-an-sich*] can come into consciousness only quite directly, namely by *it itself being conscious of itself*; to try to know it objectively is to desire something contradictory. Everything objective is [*Vorstellung*], consequently appearance, in fact a mere phenomenon of the brain."

By means of this introspective *modus operandi* Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) focuses on his self-consciousness, which is the pith of the internal realm, and when he analyses it he (Schopenhauer, 2005: 12) discovers it to be "intensely, really even exclusively, occupied with willing". This leads to the conclusion that the essence of one's being, i.e.

[52] One should not construe this as a dualistic theory. Schopenhauer is not saying that the world is comprised of two distinct substances; but rather one substance comprehended in two different ways (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100-103).

the *Ding-an-sich*, is akin to one's volitional strivings to which Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) attaches the term *Will*.[53]

Let us now reflect upon the Will in order to determine its essential *inner* characteristics.[54] Given that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is antithetical to the phenomenal world, it must, as Schopenhauer (1969a: and 1969b: 193) emphatically reiterates, be *toto genere* different therefrom. Now, it will be remembered that the defining feature of the world of appearance is the fact that it is subject to the principle of sufficient reason. In other words, the world of perception and experience is essentially subject to the laws of temporality, spatiality and causality. To say then that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is *toto genere* different from the world of perception (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 103 and Schopenhauer, 1969b: 193) simply portends that the former is not subject to the same principles as the latter. Consequently, we can conclude that the Will as *Ding-an-sich*, unlike the world of appearance, is both atemporal and aspatial and it is also impervious to the law of causality. These notions can also be *positively* characterised by stating that the Will is a unity (aspatial), it is eternal (atemporal) and it is unchanging (acausal). The Will is the sole constant in a world of fleeting forms; it is that which was, it is that which is, and it is that which will be (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 278-279). The outward manifestations of the Will – the ideas of perception – are in a constant state of flux: coming into being and passing away like the changing of the day into night and back again; but the Will, like the sun in the firmament, burns brightly without intermission. These notions, as will become conspicuous in due course, are the

[53] Although it would be extremely interesting to trace the provenance of this notion in the works of some of Schopenhauer's philosophical predecessors – such as, for instance, in Spinoza's concept of *conatus* and in the *vis viva* of Leibniz – as, likewise, it would be to explore the influence of Schopenhauer's most renowned claim upon the development of subsequent philosophical enquiry – such as the influence it had upon Nietzsche's formulation of his notion of the *Wille-zur-Macht* and Henri Bergson's concept of the *élan vital* – such discussions would, I fear, lead my study too far astray from the primary topic of the dissertation. Consequently, I have omitted such considerations, although I fully acknowledge the significance they have within the field of Schopenhauerian scholarship.

[54] At this point in my exposition I am concerned solely with the Will as *Ding-an-sich*; in a later section I shall consider the essential *outer* characteristic of the Will, i.e. a consideration of the Will as a manifestation within the realm of appearances.

foundations upon which Schopenhauer (1969b: 498) constructs his doctrine of athanasia and consequently I cannot overemphasize their importance to the central theme of my exposition. But before I proceed with the general outline of the Schopenhauerian philosophy I wish to reflect a while longer on the three characteristics of the Will as *Ding-an-sich*, viz., the fact that the Will is said to be aspatial (a unity), atemporal (eternal) and acausal (unchanging).

4.1. The Will as Aspatial

We have seen that for Schopenhauer the *principium essendi* (the principle of sufficient reason of being) is responsible for the application of time and space (the so-called "*principium individuations*") to perceptions. Thus, the possibility of the inner reality being a plurality is precluded by the fact that the *principium individuations* – and in particular spatial dimensions – does not subsist within that particular realm (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 113). It follows that the world as it is in-itself must be a unity of sorts; hence Schopenhauer (1969a: 417) speaks of the *Ding-an-sich* (thing-in-itself), i.e. in the singular, and not *things-in-themselves*, i.e. in the plural. But it must be borne in mind that this unity – for want of a better word – is unlike anything we have ever experienced before, for our comprehension of the concept of "unity" is inextricably bound to the principle of sufficient reason and therefore it does not adequately describe the Will's aspatiality and atemporality, as Schopenhauer (1969a: 113) explicates:

> "[The Will] is itself one, yet not as an object is one, for the unity of an object is known only in contrast to possible plurality. Again, the Will is one not as a concept is one, for a concept originates only through abstraction from plurality; but it is one as that which lies outside time and space, outside the *principium individuationis*, that is to say, outside the possibility of plurality."

As will be seen, the assertion that the Will is a metaphysical unity generates serious complications for Schopenhauer's doctrine of salvation (cf. the appendix), for if the Will is one then the abrogation thereof in the ascetic saint ought to lead to the dissolution of the Will *in toto*. Therefore, that the Will is a unity or aspatial leads Schopenhauer (1969a: 128-129) to the conclusion that "if, *per impossible*, a single being, even the most insignificant, were entirely annihilated, the whole world would

inevitably be destroyed with it". This remark may seem vindicated on Schopenhauer's terms, but as will become apparent once we discuss the way in which the ascetic saint attains salvation from the world, it generates a contradiction within Schopenhauer's system. In this connection, and as I do not wish to vitiate my discussion with an extremely prolix matter – which, in order to do it justice, requires an independent examination, I refer readers to the appendix where they shall find just such a discussion.

But that is not to say that our considerations regarding the ascetic concept of salvation lead us to a rejection of this claim at this stage in the discussion; on the contrary, the notion of the unity of the Will occupies an extremely significant position within Schopenhauer's system, for it is the foundation upon which his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 350-351) theory of compassion and concept of "eternal justice" are based. Even though somewhat tangential to the current discussion, I shall now turn to a brief consideration thereof. Schopenhauer (1969a: 350) distinguishes eternal justice from temporal justice by claiming that the latter "has its seat in the State" and requires the possibility of *future* retribution (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 350). The former, in striking contrast

> "[…] rules not the State but the world; this is not dependent on human institutions, not subject to chance and deception, not uncertain, wavering, and erring, but infallible, firm, and certain. The concept of retaliation implies time, therefore *eternal justice* cannot be retributive justice, and hence cannot, like that, admit respite and reprieve, and require time in order to succeed, balancing the evil deed against the evil consequence only by means of time."

According to Schopenhauer (1969a: 350) the unity of the metaphysical Will intimates that an injustice to another creature is in fact an injustice to oneself, for "[h]ere the punishment must be so linked with the offence that the two are one" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 351). Now although this notion is extremely beautiful in so far as it claims "that the world itself is the tribunal of the world" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 352), intimating that every punishment is meted out simultaneously with every wicked act so that "[i]f we could lay all the misery of the world in one pan of the scales and all its guilt in the other, the pointer would certainly show them to be in equilibrium" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 352), upon closer reflection it does not in fact offer a genuine consolation for the perpetration of injustices. For suffering, as Copleston (1947: 147) correctly notes, concerns solely the individual phenomenal appearance and not the Will as *Ding-an-sich*. It is ridiculous, and may even be considered offensive, to suggest that Hitler, for

instance, suffered vicariously in all the millions of people who perished in the Holocaust and the Second World War; for the fact remains that suffering concerns solely the individual, i.e. the phenomenal appearance of the Will and not the Will as *Ding-an-sich*. Thus, along with Copleston (1947: 147) we can rhetorically enquire:

> "[…] if it is the Will that is guilty of the crime of the world's existence and it is the individual alone that pays for that guilt, where is the 'eternal justice'?"

Nonetheless, it is essential to comprehend that for Schopenhauer (1969a: 372-374) genuine moral actions emanate from compassion (in German: *Mitleid*, literally, "*to suffer with*"), which is founded upon the realisation of the unity of the metaphysical Will. Hence, although it generates complications for Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine and does not, upon close consideration, offer a cogent argument for "eternal justice", the unity of the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is an extremely significant notion within Schopenhauer's system.

4.2. The Will as Acausal

I turn now to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) insistence that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is impervious to the law of causality. This is an extremely significant point in connection with Schopenhauer's theory of immortality in so far as it intimates that the Will is not susceptible to alteration and thus perpetually remains as it always is and was. In contradistinction thereto, the phenomenal world is in a constant state of flux, i.e. perpetually undergoing transformation and never remaining constant. It is not unreasonable to assume that death is a consequence of this process of alteration: illness is a biological change which affects further changes in the organism which, in turn, ultimately leads to death: the latter is therefore the effect of a long concatenation of causes. Thus, without the *principium fiendi* it seems death would not exist.

Now, that the principle of causality is a form of the principle of sufficient reason (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 37-38) intimates that the causal law cannot be applied to the world as it is in-itself, i.e. the world independent of cognition. In the previous section I discussed at length that this view controversially maintains that the world as it is in-itself cannot *cause* sensations; however, I now wish to consider a matter previously

discussed in relation thereto, viz., that the metaphysical Will does not, according to Schopenhauer cause particular appearances, but rather, that it (somewhat mysteriously) "manifests" them into the perceptible world. Given that, as a radical idealist, Schopenhauer (1889a: 58) is committed to the *a priority* of the causal principle, he refuses to speak, as discussed, of the Will as *Ding-an-sich* as causing the existence of phenomenal objects. Now let us consider the matter in relation to the object in which one discovers the Will to be the essence of the world, viz., the subject's own body. Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) argues that

> "[t]he act of Will and the action of the body are not two different states objectively known, connected by the bond of causality; they do not stand in the relation of cause and effect, but are one and the same thing, though given in two entirely different ways, first quite directly, and then in perception for the Understanding. The action of the body is nothing but the act of Will objectified, i.e., translated into perception."

This leads Schopenhauer (1969a: 108) to the startling teleological[55] conclusion that:

> "[…] the whole series of actions, and consequently every individual act and likewise its condition, namely the whole body itself which performs it, and therefore also the process through which and in which the body exists, are nothing but the phenomenal appearance of the Will, its becoming visible, the *objectivity of the Will*."

[55] Although it may strike us nowadays as bizarre, it was not uncommon, prior to the Darwinian theory of evolution by means of natural selection, for even the most erudite of people to maintain that there was an *intelligent purposiveness* active within the manifold productions of nature. In this connection one ought to consider Hume's famous work *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, wherein even the sceptical character *Philo* is purported to subscribe to the teleological view; for Hume (1998: 77) has him state: "[a] purpose, an intention, a design strikes everywhere the most careless, the most stupid thinker; and no man can be so hardened in absurd systems as at all times to reject it". It is interesting to note, as does Gardiner (1967: 326), that Schopenhauer so "greatly admired" this work by Hume that he even contemplated translating it into German (ibid.). I conjecture that Schopenhauer concurred with *Philo's* aforementioned pronouncement.

This is extremely significant in so far as it intimates that the Will, contrary to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 115) assertions, is not blind but intentionally manifests itself in the phenomenal world as certain bodily organs and in specific animal behaviours. In due course I shall return to a lengthy discussion on this matter. For the moment we can disregard the inconsistency this notion generates and merely observe that in an attempt to evade the claim that the Will is the cause of objects, Schopenhauer (1969a: 108) maintains that every bodily organ is merely the Will phenomenalised:

> "[…] the parts of the body must correspond completely to the chief demands and desires by which the Will manifests itself; they must be the visible expression of these desires. Teeth, gullet, and intestinal canal are objectified hunger; the genitals are objectified sexual impulse; grasping hands and nimble feet correspond to the more indirect strivings of the Will which they represent."

4.3. The Will as Atemporal

Finally, it is necessary to consider the fact that the Will is said to be atemporal, i.e. not located within time (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 113). It must be understood that for a radical idealist time is a synthetic *a priori* feature of the mind and thus it applies solely to the phenomenal world and not to the world as it is in-itself. It follows therefrom that if time is brought to experience by way of the mind then the world as it is in-itself must be utterly devoid of temporal relations. Schopenhauer (1969a: 176) consequently construes this atemporality as akin to eternity; but here "eternity" must not be comprehended as an eternal duration (which, unwittingly, implicates the notion of time), but rather, as a form of *timelessness*. Thus, the metaphysical Will is said to be eternal only in so far as it is devoid of time. Even at this stage in my exposition I must acknowledge that this significant claim is extremely problematic for Schopenhauer, because, as Paul Edwards (2009: 170) notes, our volition strivings "can be dated and their duration can be measured". Therefore, in the second edition of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969b: 196-197) acknowledges that the Will is in fact located in time and hence it cannot be entirely identical with the *Ding-an-sich*. The mature Schopenhauer (1969b: 197) consequently refers to the Will as "the nearest and clearest *phenomenon* of the thing-in-itself"; as such the Will must be the *Ding-an-sich's* most "immediate" manifestation. But this unwittingly implies the notion of a

multidimensional view of the essence of the world. I shall leave this matter for a later section in which I attempt to excoriate Schopenhauer's theory in order to illustrate the untenability of his doctrine of athanasia. However, for the moment one must realise the significance the atemporality of the Will has for Schopenhauer's (1969a: 282) theory of immortality:

> "For it is true that everyone is transitory only as phenomenon; on the other hand, as thing-in-itself he is timeless, and so endless. But also only as phenomenon is the individual different from the other things of the world; as thing-in-itself, he is the Will that appears in everything, and death does away with the illusion that separates his consciousness from that of the rest; this is future existence or immortality. His exemption from death, which belongs to him only as thing-in-itself, coincides for the phenomenon with the continued existence of the rest of the world."

In short, the phenomenon of death belongs solely to the world of appearances, whereas the Will – given that it is atemporal and hence eternal – does not arise and pass away. Now this atemporality of the Will manifests itself in the phenomenal world as the so-called "*nunc stans* of the scholastics" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 279). The notions of past, present and future belong solely to the temporal (phenomenal) world; but when applied to the Will as *Ding-an-sich* they necessarily lose all meaning. Thus, reflection reveals that the Will which manifested itself a million years ago is absolutely identical to the Will which manifests itself in the objects of the present: for the Will is eternal, unchanging and one. As such, "the present [is] the only form in which the Will manifests itself. It will not run away from the Will, nor the Will from it" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 280). Consequently, the one, eternal Will perpetually exists in the ever-abiding present.

Now given that every individual is essentially a manifestation of Will it follows that one's inner essence is indestructible: the phenomenal form is subject to individuality, alteration and finitude and thus the phenomenon of death belongs solely thereto; but the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is impervious to all such conditions. Hence, it is by way of focusing on our inner being that we discover our immortality. Thus Schopenhauer (1969a: 280) writes:

> "If, therefore, a person fears death as annihilation, it is just as if he were to think that the sun can lament in the evening and say: 'Woe is me! I am going down into eternal night' […] The Earth rolls on from day into night; the individual dies; but the Sun itself burns without intermission, an eternal noon."

Although I admit that Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia is extremely beautiful I shall, in later sections, attempt to illustrate that the Will is in fact subject to time, space and causality; thereby undermining Schopenhauer's claim that the Will is immortal. Yet, although Schopenhauer advances a doctrine of immortality – something many other philosophers have done – it is important to note that it is unique in the Western philosophical canon.

4.4. Schopenhauer's Thought in Relation to his Philosophical Predecessors

Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) claim that the Will constitutes the essence of the world amounts, in my estimation, to a revolution in philosophical thinking. However, like all iconoclastic thoughts it retains elements of the system from which it originated, viz. Enlightenment thought. Allow me to elucidate. The identification of volitional strivings as the most fundamental aspect of human beings is antithetical to many cherished philosophical and religious principles, one such view is that of the human as an *animal rationabile*.[56] Bertrand Russell (1946: 786) notes in his *History of Western Philosophy* that one of the most important consequences of Schopenhauer's philosophy is "his doctrine that [W]ill is superior to knowledge". By maintaining that the Will is *prius* and the intellect *posterius* Schopenhauer (1969b: 198) broke with an old philosophical tradition which maintains that the intellect is primary.[57] As Schopenhauer (1889b: 238) states in his work *Über den Willen in der Natur*:

> "The fundamental truth of my doctrine, which places that doctrine in opposition with all others that have ever existed, is the complete separation between the Will and the intellect, which all philosophers before me had

[56] A rational animal.

[57] Cartwright (2005: 90) describes this as "[a reversal] of some of the main tendencies found in Western philosophy, especially as articulated by such figures as Plato, René Descartes, and G. W. F. Hegel".

> looked upon as inseparable; or rather, I ought to say that they had regarded the Will as conditioned by, nay, mostly even as a mere function of, the intellect, assumed by them to be the fundamental substance of our spiritual being. […] With me, that which is eternal and indestructible in man, therefore, that which constitutes his vital principle, is not *the soul*, but – if I may use a chemical term – its radical: and this is *the Will*."

It is primarily for this reason that Schopenhauer's philosophy is often pejoratively described as "irrational" (Cartwright, 2005: 89) or as venerating the irrational;[58] intimating, perhaps, that the philosophy is the product of insanity or that it is an illogical system, unworthy of serious philosophical consideration. However, to maintain such a view is to betoken a misunderstanding of Schopenhauer's philosophy considered *in toto*. For although Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) identifies the pith of reality as an irrational striving he does not believe that it should triumph; on the contrary, the third and fourth books of Schopenhauer's principal work[59] intimate that the ideal is for rationality to triumph over the irrational urges of the Will. To this extent I maintain that Schopenhauer retains an element of Enlightenment thought and he is consequently, in spite of his iconoclastic notions, not entirely outside that tradition.

4.5. Schopenhauer's Selection of the Word "Will"

Now the claim for which Schopenhauer is perhaps most renowned is certainly not without ample criticism, and in due course I shall subject it to thorough scrutiny. However, I do not wish to vitiate this outline with prolix criticisms which will undoubtedly confuse the presentation of my exposition, and I shall therefore postpone these comments for a later discussion. For the moment I wish to explicate Schopenhauer's choice of the world "*Will*" as opposed to more familiar terms such as "energy" or "force". Some commentators on the Schopenhauerian philosophy, such as

[58] Karl Popper, for instance, called Schopenhauer "the father of modern irrationalism" (cited in Cartwright, 2005: 90)

[59] "The [appearance] independent of the principle of sufficient reason: the Platonic Idea: the object of art" and "With the attainment of self-knowledge, affirmation and denial of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*]."

Bryan Magee[60] and S. Jack Odell,[61] have ventured to equate the Will with the concept of force or energy, in spite of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 111) explicit warning to the contrary:

> "[…] I should be misunderstood by anyone who thought that ultimately it was all the same whether we expressed this essence-in-itself of all phenomena by the word Will or by any other word."

To fully comprehend why it is a serious error to equate the Will with such concepts as "force" and "energy", and why it should consequently not be done, it is necessary to make mention of Schopenhauer's views regarding science and metaphysics.

At the very outset of the second book of the first volume of his *magnum opus* Schopenhauer (1969a: 96) distinguishes between two branches of natural science, viz., morphology and aetiology. The former concerns the classification and description of forms and shapes (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 96) – it is concerned in the main with the *outward appearance* of things and not with their *inner content*; while the latter is concerned with the causal law (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 96), i.e., a form of the principle of sufficient reason,[62] and is likewise entirely occupied with the *outward appearance*, as opposed to the *inner essence*, of objects. As such, the scientific method thus defined can only offer "superficial" knowledge, i.e. knowledge regarding appearances within the realm of the principle of sufficient reason, and not knowledge pertaining to the essence thereof. As Schopenhauer (1974b: 91) states:

> "Just as we know only the surface of the globe, but not the great solid mass of its interior, so we know empirically of things and of the world generally

[60] "The term 'force', rejected by [Schopenhauer], would have been vastly preferable [to the word 'Will']. 'Energy' would have been better still." (Magee, 1997: 144)

[61] "[…] The reader may feel some uncertainty concerning exactly what Schopenhauer meant to refer to with the word 'Will'. I have considered all of the following: desire, drive, impulse, striving, and Magee's view that it is what physicists refer to as force or energy" (Odell, 2001: 54). Were it not for the pernicious influence of Magee, Odell could have been forgiven for his "elucidation" of the term.

[62] Namely, the *principium fiendi* (the principle of sufficient reason of becoming).

> nothing but their *phenomenal appearance*, i.e. their surface. The precise knowledge of this is physics taken in the widest sense."

As such the scientific method cannot offer complete knowledge about the world, for it is, by its very nature, occupied solely with appearances and it cannot, therefore, penetrate into the essence of things (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 98-99). But, closely associated with that criticism is the fact that science, according to Schopenhauer (1889b:219), must necessarily utilise inexplicable concepts in order to fully explicate the world;[63] these concepts, such as "force" or "energy", do not readily admit of a definition, they act merely as *explicative devices* for unknowns; they are in a word *qualitates occultae*, i.e. "occult qualities, necessary but scientifically inexplicable elements of scientific explanations of the world" (Cartwright, 2005: 52). As Schopenhauer (1889b: 219) states in his work *Über den Willen in der Natur*:

> "Physical science is wont to designate this unknown, inaccessible something, at which its investigations stop short and which is taken for granted in all its explanations, by such terms as physical force, vital force, formative principles, etc., etc., which in fact mean no more than x, y, z."

Thus it is evident that the terms "force" and "energy" – thought by Magee (1997: 144) to be more comprehensible than, and consequently preferable to, the term "Will" – are in fact, for Schopenhauer (1889a: 52), mysterious terms which stand *in lieu* of *ignoramus* – "we do not know" – i.e. ignorance. It is primarily for this reason that Schopenhauer (1969a: 110-112) rejects them. But the reason that physical science inevitably reaches the unknown is due to the fact that, for Schopenhauer (1969a: 98-99) at least, the phenomenal world is founded upon the metaphysical. But due to the fact that physical science must necessarily utilise the principle of sufficient reason (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 96) it cannot transcend the phenomenal world and positively determine the nature of the way the world is in-itself.

[63] This is due, of course, to the fact that the perceptible world is essentially a "manifestation" of the mysterious *Ding-an-sich*; or, in other words, the *Ding-an-sich* is the cause of the perceptible world (cf. the section above entitled "Objective Causality"). Thus, physical science inevitably arrives at mysterious, inexplicable phenomena when it reaches the point at which the principle of sufficient reason is no longer applicable and the metaphysical realm begins.

But what, if anything, can correct this defect in the scientific method? In a word Schopenhauer's (1969a: 112) response is *philosophy*, and in particular, *metaphysics*. This is due, of course, to the fact that the mysterious *Ding-an-sich* is the cause of sensations: thus, physical science investigates natural, i.e. perceptible, phenomena until it reaches the point at which appearances end and the metaphysical realm begins. As Schopenhauer (1889a: 52) states:

> "Every *true*, consequently, really primary force of Nature – and every fundamental chemical property belongs to these forces – is essentially a *qualitas occulta*, i.e. it does not admit of physical, but only of metaphysical explanation: in other words, of an explanation which transcends the world of phenomena."

Of course, physical science – which is committed to the observation of phenomena as they relate to the principle of sufficient reason – cannot enter into that metaphysical realm and thus is the scientist coerced to utilise mysterious terms *in lieu* of those phenomena which transcend his apprehension, which is, of course, perennially committed to the principle of sufficient reason. In other words, the physical scientist must ultimately use mysterious, uncertain terms for *metaphysical* phenomena, which are necessarily presupposed in every scientific hypothesis, given that the phenomenal world is founded upon the metaphysical.

But the suggestion that metaphysics can complete the scientific view of the world has tremendous appeal to many philosophers in so far it seems to intimate that the philosopher and the physical scientist can work in unison to achieve a complete understanding of the world and existence. In this way philosophy is rendered less impracticable than is ordinarily assumed. But of the two disciplines philosophy is, to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 102) mind at least, the greater, in so far as it supplies recondite knowledge about the essence of the world and completes the superficial, i.e., principle of sufficient reason-based, scientific view of reality. I shall return to this significant discussion in my criticism of Schopenhauer's views, but I imagine that such a claim as to philosophy's elevation above that of the scientific method must necessarily incense the modern mind because nowadays science has become a surrogate for decrepit religious beliefs. This striking phenomenon is most evident in the zeal with which many secularists cite "scientific evidence" from journals and research studies as confirmation of their views, just as a religionist cites the Bible in defence of his opinions. Now

although there is an obvious distinction between scientific and religious thought – in so far as the former requires numerous empirical corroborations for every propounded view, whereas the latter does not – one would do well to remember that science is a discipline dependent on the finite human brain – it has not been bestowed upon humankind as a generous gift from outside, by some superior omniscient being. Moreover, it must be retained in consciousness that the human brain, as a product of an extensive process of evolution, did not evolve to deal with abstract thought and scientific endeavours. This is due to the fact that science and abstract thinking are not conducive to animal survival[64] in so far as such endeavours would require the creature to expend a tremendous amount of energy upon superfluous intellectual pursuits while leading a sedentary lifestyle, both of which would hinder the animal's ultimate survival.

Now, bearing in mind the aforementioned discussion, the question I seek to address here is the following: is the Will, like the scientific terms "energy" and "force", a *qualitas occulta*, i.e. an inexplicable X which one utilises quite arbitrarily, in spite of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 111) assertions to the contrary, to explicate all natural phenomena? And if so, could those more familiar scientific terms be used *in lieu* of the term Will as both Magee (1997: 144) and Odell (2001: 54) intimate?

First, we must observe that the Will, being an entity of inner-sense, has no form, no scent and no texture; it cannot, as Schopenhauer ought contentedly admit, be known as an item of outer experience and, consequently, if it is known (whatever that ultimately means), it is not known in the same way that a physical object is known; that is to say that the Will is not known according to the principle of sufficient reason. But, Schopenhauer (1889b: 376) insists, it is still known to us, albeit in a unique and distinct way:

[64] I maintain that the modern view of science as a device to improve the lot of humankind is spurious. Genuine scientific pursuits are those which strive to comprehend nature in its entirety, unconcerned with the practicability of such endeavours. If, of course, science inadvertently improves humankind's condition in some way then that is to be considered an adventitious advantage; but the benefits of science for humankind as a whole should never be considered its ultimate *telos* and hence human interests should not, in theory at least, direct scientific investigation.

> "[…] It is fair to let me, as a serious man, only speak of things which I really know and only make use of words which I attach a quite definite meaning; since this alone can be communicated with security to others, and Vauvenargues is quite right in saying: '*la clarté est la bonne foi des philosophes'*.[65] Therefore if I use the words 'Will, [Will-to-Life]', this is no mere *ens rationis*, no hypostasis set up by me, nor is it a term of vague, uncertain meaning; on the contrary, I refer him, who asks what it is, to his own inner self, where he will find it entire, nay, in colossal dimensions, as a true *ens realissimum*. I have accordingly not explained the world out of the unknown, but rather out of that which is better known than anything, and known to us moreover in quite a different way from all the rest."

And again, in the second book of the first volume of *Die Welt*, Schopenhauer (1969a: 111) states:

> "But the word *Will*, which, like a magic word, is to reveal to us the innermost essence of everything in nature, by no means expresses an unknown quantity, something reached by inferences and syllogisms, but something known absolutely and immediately, and that so well that we know and understand what Will is better than anything else, be it what it may. Hitherto, the concept of *Will* has been subsumed under the concept of *force*; I, on the other hand, do exactly the reverse, and intend every force in nature to be conceived as Will. We must not imagine that this is a dispute about words or a matter of no consequence; on the contrary, it is of the very highest significance […]."

But what precisely is one to make of this argument, viz., that although the concept of the Will cannot adequately be explicated or fully communicated to others, it is "better known than anything" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 376)? Were an individual to tell me that he is unable to convey a concept he wishes to propound I would assume one of two possibilities: either he does not possess the sufficient vocabulary to express his thought, or his thought cannot be communicated, eloquence notwithstanding, because the notion itself is vacuous. Schopenhauer, however, is renowned in the sphere of articulacy; he cannot claim, therefore that he lacks the ability to explicate the concept of the Will. Indeed, no one could do the term more justice than him. Therefore, we are obliged to assume that either the notion is vacuous (in which case we may as well cease our

[65] "Clarity is the good faith of philosophers".

exploration of the philosophy) or that Schopenhauer does not explicate the term because the concept itself will not permit of an explanation: it is, in a word, *incommunicable*. This may appear an inadmissible fact within Schopenhauer's philosophy – viz., to base an entire philosophical system upon such an uncertain foundation as that of an incommunicable concept. However, in defence of Schopenhauer's thesis, I maintain that there is another phenomenon as incommunicable as the concept of the Will, and yet known with certainty by all who have experienced it. I shall consequently use this phenomenon in an analogous manner in the hope that it shall render the concept of the Will more intelligible.

In this regard the Will may be compared to the sensation of being in love.[66; 67] The state of being in love is, like the Will, incommunicable, but it is entirely comprehendible to

[66] This is no arbitrary analogy, for in volume one of his principal work Schopenhauer (1969a: 369-370) explicitly states that "goodness of disposition, disinterested virtue, and pure nobleness of mind […] do not come from abstract knowledge; yet they do come from knowledge. *But it is a direct and intuitive knowledge that, just because it is not abstract, cannot be communicated, but must dawn on each of us*. It therefore finds its real and adequate expression not in words, but simply and solely in deeds, in conduct, in the course of a man's life." It is interesting that both knowledge of the Will and knowledge of compassion (which emanates from the knowledge of the Will's unity) are said by Schopenhauer (1969a: 370) to emanate from an immediate knowledge which cannot be communicated. In an attempt to further illustrate the connection between the sensation of being in love and the metaphysical Will I note that Schopenhauer likens compassion to practical mysticism (Neeley, 2012: 115). However, I fully acknowledge that this analogy is at variance with Schopenhauer's (1969a: 154) view that the Will is the ultimate source of all conflict and suffering. However, the contradiction can easily be resolved by way of an appeal to the dichotomisation of the *Ding-an-sich* and the phenomenal world: contemplation of the world as it is in-itself generates compassion in so far as one recognises oneself in the suffering other; whereas strife and pain belong solely to the phenomenal world wherein the *principium individuationis* places one organism in conflict with another.

[67] It ought to be borne in mind that in my comparison of love with the metaphysical Will I am referring solely to a genuine, compassionate love (*caritas*) and not to a selfish, lustful love (*eros*). The latter Schopenhauer (1969b: 534) characterises as nothing more than "[…] the composition of the next generation", thereby precluding it from a comparison with the metaphysical Will, in so far as it is not something incapable of being ordinarily comprehended

an individual who is, or has been, in love. Neither a poem, nor a sonnet or a musical composition can ever hope to convey the true idea of love to one who has not been intoxicated by this tormenting fiend. Romeo's amorous words to his sweet Juliet are meaningless until one has directly experienced the phenomenon of being in love. In other words, he who wishes to *know* the meaning of the term love must experience the state of being in love. I maintain that as it is with love, so it is with the Will. Thus, on this account, the Will is either known or it is not known, but it is not something communicable to another – one must, as it were *feel* the Will from within to comprehend it. Now as the Will constitutes our fundamental essence all humans possess the potential to know what the Will is; yet none can verbalise and explicate it.[68] This necessarily raises the significant question as to whether the knowable essence can be associated with any communicable term. In the second section of my discussion on the Will, I attempt to argue that Schopenhauer's ascription of the term "Will" to the essence of the universe actually renders it a phenomenal entity in so far as it is subsumed

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but as something actually known in the everyday sense. However, in a later section, viz., 8.2. *Knowledge of the Will as a Product of Intellectual Intuition*, I explicitly reject the argument here propounded by indicating that one cannot have knowledge (even if it is a unique form thereof) of something which transcends the necessary preconditions of all knowledge claims.

[68] I wish to note here that, in spite of an obvious similarity in views in so far as both maintain that the essence of all objects is one or unified, Schopenhauer (1974b: 99-102) was highly critical of Spinoza's pantheism, which identifies God as the essence of the world, principally because it does not actually explicate anything. Schopenhauer (1974b: 99) maintains, correctly in my opinion, that the pantheist attempts to explicate the world – something unknown – from something even more unknown, viz., God; pantheism thus substitutes one mysterious entity for another. To say that the world is God is therefore to say nothing, but "to enrich the language with a superfluous synonym for the word world" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 99). In other words, the claim that the world is akin to God amounts, in the last analysis, to mere sophistry: it states nothing, for God is in fact a *qualitas occulta*. This observation stands in contrast with Schopenhauer's (1889b: 376) claim that his identification of the ultimate reality with the Will is "no mere *ens rationis* […] nor [an identification] of vague, uncertain meaning" but a genuinely meaningful concept. Thus, Schopenhauer's philosophy, unlike that of pantheism, does not attempt to explicate "the world out of the unknown, but rather out of that which is better known than anything, and known to us moreover in quite a different way from all the rest" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 376).

according to the *principium cognoscendi*; i.e., the inner essence one discovers by way of introspection is necessarily rendered an abstract representation (a concept) when a term – be it what it may – is applied to it. But, for the moment, one need not trouble oneself with this criticism; at this point in the discussion it is sufficient for one to comprehend that Schopenhauer (1969a: 111) took his concept of the Will to be an adequate term for the *Ding-an-sich*, as that which is best known and known, moreover, in a distinct way from everything else.

As a consequence of these observations we can confidently conclude that, unlike the vague scientific terms of "force" or "energy", the Will is not a *qualitas occulta*; it is something known immediately (intuitively), albeit incommunicable (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 111). We can, therefore, confidently reject Magee (1997: 144) and Odell's (2001: 54) equation of the Will with a force or an energy because, for Schopenhauer (1889b: 219), such terms are *qualitates occultae*, whereas the concept of the Will – as the only numinous entity actually known by us – completes and compliments the scientific *Weltanschauung*. Thus Schopenhauer (1889b:246) remarks:

> "Wherever explanation of the physical comes to an end, it is met by the metaphysical; and wherever this last is accessible to immediate knowledge, the result will be, as here, the Will."

Now if the Will is indeed the *Ding-an-sich* then it must certainly not be supposed, as Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) notes, that "the act of Will and the action of the body are […] two different sates" and, further, that the former is connected to the latter by way of "the bond of causality". To comprehend Schopenhauer's insistence upon this point it is necessary to return to Kant's distinction between noumena and phenomena: for Kant intimates, as Schopenhauer (1969a: 436) observes in his *Criticism of the Kantian Philosophy*, that sensations (noumena) are actual *substances* which *cause* perceptions (phenomena) in the subject's mind; but it ought to be evident by now that to apply the *a priori* laws of substance and causality beyond their designated realm, i.e. the realm of appearances, is inadmissible for a radical idealist. As a consequence, Schopenhauer (1969a: 108) speaks of the Will as "manifesting" or "objectifying" itself in the phenomenal world in an attempt to evade the accusation of applying the aforementioned *a priori* concepts to the *Ding-an-sich.* On this account the Will is not one particular substance underlying another, viz., the body, and thus the two "do not stand in the

relation of cause and effect, but are one and the same thing, though given in two entirely different ways, first quite directly, and then in perception for the Understanding. The action of the body is nothing but the act of Will objectified, i.e. translated into perception" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100). This leads Schopenhauer (1969a: 108) to a startling conclusion, which I have previously mentioned, viz., that every bodily organ "must be the visible expression" of the Will's desires:

> "Teeth, gullet, and intestinal canal are objectified hunger; the genitals are objectified sexual impulse; grasping hands and nimble feet correspond to the more indirect strivings of the Will which they represent."

This view, as we shall see in the subsequent sections, generates another problem within Schopenhauer's philosophy; viz., it intimates that the Will is not "blind" as Schopenhauer (1969a: 115, et al.) emphatically insists, but that it purposefully and consciously manifests itself as certain bodily organs in order to ensure the survival of a particular creature. Thus, I argue that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100 and 113) (unsuccessful) attempt to evade the difficulty of an objective form of causality and a heterogenous view of the world as it is in-itself unwittingly generates the notion that the metaphysical Will is not in fact blind, but purposefully creates the multitude of creatures found throughout the world.[69]

But, in connection with the central theme of my exposition, one may justifiably wonder as to the Will's independent existence from the phenomenal body. As we shall see, Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia is based primarily on the view that the Will, given that it is unhindered by the principle of sufficient reason, is both eternal and unchanging. Thus, although the phenomenal body is subject to destruction, the Will is said to be impervious thereto. But if the connection between the body and the Will is one of such inseparability then it seems impossible to "really imagine this Will without [one's] body" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 102). As such, Schopenhauer's attempt to closely associate the phenomenal appearance with the *Ding-an-sich* in an attempt to avoid the postulation of an objective form of causality unwittingly vitiates his theory of athanasia; for it would appear that the Will can only exist in connection with a physical body. Just

[69] In contrast thereto, if one accepts the heterogeneity of the world as it is in-itself and the possibility of "objective causality" the problem of the Will being conscious and intentionally manifesting itself in the phenomenal world dissolves.

as it seems meaningless to me to speak of a non-brain-based cognition so too does it strike me as absurd to speak of a disembodied hunger or a disembodied sexual lust. The Will's inseparability from the phenomenal body seems to intimate that upon dying one's Will perishes therewith. I shall return to this matter in due course.[70]

4.6. The Solipsistic Problem

Thus far we have considered Schopenhauer's argument egocentrically, i.e. solely in terms of the individual. From this perspective only the enquiring individual engaged with Schopenhauer's philosophy and his introspective *modus operandi* can be certain that he is both appearance *and Will*; for, as was discussed, one's inner nature is accessible solely to oneself. But how can one know that this non-Cartesian dualistic description is true of other animate, perhaps even inanimate, objects of which he experiences solely as appearances? Indeed, when an individual observes other creatures he experiences only their bodies and not their Wills, consequently how, I reiterate, can one be certain that other animate objects are, like oneself, both appearance and Will? This doubtfulness Schopenhauer (1969a: 104) maintains is:

> "[…] *Theoretical egoism* [i.e. solipsism], which in this way regards as phantoms all phenomena outside its own Will, just as practical egoism does in a practical respect; thus in it a man regards and treats only his own person as a real person, all others as mere phantoms."

Schopenhauer (1969a: 104) proceeds in his discussion by noting that the solipsistic problem generated by his radical idealism "can never be refuted by proofs, yet in philosophy it has never been positively used otherwise than as a sceptical sophism, i.e., for the sake of appearance. As a serious conviction, on the other hand, it could be found only in a madhouse; as such it would then need not so much a refutation as a cure". This has led to the not entirely unfounded criticism that Schopenhauer is "soft on solipsism" (Young, 2005: 70).[71] But following the eminent Schopenhauerian scholar,

[70] Cf. 8.3. The Will as Subject to the *Principium Individuationis*.

[71] For instance, Patrick Gardiner (1963: 59) states: "[i]t is, I think, true that [Schopenhauer] never […] properly faced the philosophical problem of our knowledge of other people

Julian Young (2005: 70), albeit with qualifications, I maintain that Schopenhauer does tacitly offer a refutation of the solipsistic position, viz., in his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 154) discussion of the Will at variance with itself. It must be understood that it is of the utmost significance for Schopenhauer to illustrate that other phenomenal objects are manifestations of the Will, for if he cannot prove this then those appearances "would inevitably pass us by like an empty dream, or a ghostly vision not worth our consideration" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 99).

4.7.1. The Analogical Argument

However, before I present and discuss what I consider to be the most cogent refutation of theoretical egoism, I wish to observe that there is another far more accessible argument which can be used to surmount the difficulty.[72] This is the so-called "argument from analogy", whereby perceived similarities in one object (i.e. one's own body) may be used to infer something that has yet to be observed in another (i.e. the bodies of other organisms). In short, the argument maintains that if I observe other bodies similar to my own then it is not unreasonable to assume – by way of analogy – that they must be homologous to it in inner respects. Thus, on this account, as T. L. S. Sprigge (2005: 846) notes: "if it is true that my body is Will in its real inner being, then, since the physical world outwardly seems homogenous with it, and belongs to the same unitary interacting system, it is reasonable to suppose that the same is true of physical nature, not only in other humans and animals, as is quite easily granted, but

conceived of as animated beings with an inner life like our own, or took account of the difficulties which some of his own theoretical presuppositions might be held to raise in this regard".

[72] So as to avoid any confusion, I must explicitly state here that there is, in fact, a third argument for extending the Will throughout organic nature, viz., the teleological argument. This argument, however, intimates that, contrary to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 115) assertions, the Will is not "blind", but that it knowingly manifests itself as it does in the phenomenal world. As the matter is significant, albeit extremely complex, I have placed it at the conclusion of this section; however, its proper place is in fact here.

throughout".[73] However, there is a difficulty with the analogical argument generated by Schopenhauer (1969b: 196-197) with regard to the qualification he makes concerning the identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich* in the second volume of *Die Welt*. Therein, Schopenhauer (1969b: 196) states that he has:

> "[…] always kept it in mind, that even the inward observation we have of our own Will still does not by any means furnish an exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself."

The reason for this is due to the fact that the Will, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 197) reluctantly admits, is located within time. This is a significant matter to which I shall return in due course; however, for the moment it is necessary to reflect solely on the fact that if the *Ding-an-sich* is not entirely identical to the notion of the Will, then one cannot confidently assert that the *Ding-an-sich* manifests itself in a homologous manner in other creatures as it does in oneself. For if we concede credibility to the notion that the *Ding-an-sich* may be multidimensional and that the Will is solely one aspect thereof, then one cannot merely assume by way of analogy that because the essence manifests itself as Will in oneself, that this must necessarily be the case for all other phenomena. Thus, Schopenhauer's (1969b: 196-197) qualification of his most renowned claim, viz., that the Will is the *Ding-an-sich*, ultimately renders the analogical argument untenable.

4.7.2. The Practical Egoist Argument

I turn now, therefore, to my attempted refutation of theoretical egoism by way of the so-called "practical egoist argument", which I take to be the most credible even if it is, like the analogical argument, committed to a unitary view of the *Ding-an-sich*. To comprehend it one must attend to the notion of *practical egoism*, i.e. the phenomenon of selfishness which in extreme cases leads to murder, rape and theft; for I maintain that it is by way of a consideration of the struggle between creatures that solipsism can be effectively surmounted. In order to comprehend my refutation, one must first bear in mind that for Schopenhauer (1969a: 104) the claim that solely oneself exists is

[73] I shall shortly discuss in earnest the controversial extension of the Will to inanimate objects.

tantamount to the view that solely one's own self possesses the metaphysical Will; thus, it follows, that if it can be shown by some indirect means that other creatures possess what appears to be the Will the difficulty can be averted. But how exactly is that to be achieved?

It will be recalled that in connection with my criticism of radical idealism I argued that the world as it is in-itself must contribute something to the nature of phenomenal objects in so far as the latter often present themselves as disagreeable and consequently cannot be mere figments of the subject's imagination, which, I observe, if they were, would necessarily present agreeable objects and scenarios thereto. In a like manner I shall now attempt to argue that the conflict and strife generated between different creatures is in fact proof of their independent existence; for the individuated Will is said by Schopenhauer (1969a: 154 and 1974b: 323) to be the cause of perpetual conflict between creatures. However, if solely oneself were to possess the Will and all other entities were hollow appearances, i.e. fabrications of one's own mind, would they not then perpetually present themselves as congenial? Thus, it seems to me that the answer to the solipsistic predicament is to be found in Schopenhauer's discussion of the way in which the metaphysical Will manifests itself in the world of appearance: for if other creatures were mere "hollow appearances" – i.e., fabrications of one's mind, and by implication of one's Will – they would not, I conjecture, be experienced by the subject as disagreeable and hostile.[74] If solely the subject were a manifestation of the Will and all other objects were mere ideas, would the mind, and by extension the Will, not present to itself agreeable scenarios – given that they originate therefrom – just as it is thought by psychoanalysts that unconscious desires are presented and fulfilled – albeit in a disguised form – in dreams (cf. Freud, 2001: 11)? What possible motivation could the Will – which is said to perpetually will life (Cartwright, 2005: 187) – possess to portray, for instance, the image of a ravenous carnivorous predator or a scene devoid

[74] Previously (in 4.6.), I acknowledge the fact that I am indebted to Young (2005: 70) for this interpretation. However, it is to be noted that Young (2005: 70) intimates that it is by way of compassion, i.e. Schopenhauer's "ethical philosophy", that solipsism is ultimately refuted; whereas I stress the phenomenon of suffering as a means thereto.

of nourishment and comfort?[75] I maintain that the competitive state existing between organisms in nature, which I shall subsequently present and discuss in detail in the following primary section of my thesis, is a refutation of the solipsistic position within the Schopenhauerian system – for it is only by way of recourse to the metaphysical Will manifesting itself in various individuals that the hostility within nature can be cogently explicated. In other words, it is only if we conceive of the Will as acting (as an instinct towards the preservation and continuation of life) within each individual (as it does in the subject) that we can explicate the discord we observe in the phenomenal world. For instance, both the predator and the fleeing prey which it pursues must be manifestations of the Will, for if the prey were a mere appearance, i.e. idea, in the mind of the predator it would not flee but readily present itself thereto; likewise, if solely the prey animal were a manifestation of the Will it would undoubtedly portray to itself a scene devoid of dangerous predatory animals. But given that each individual organism is a manifestation of the ever-hungry, insatiable metaphysical Will (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 154 and Schopenhauer, 1974b: 323) we see discord and strife abound everywhere in the world. That, so it seems to me, is a cogent refutation of the claim that solely the pensive subject is a manifestation of the Will.

4.8. The Extension of the Will to Inanimate Objects

Schopenhauer's (1969b: 296-297) extension of his thesis to include inanimate natural phenomena is far more controversial; for the claim that inanimate phenomena are to be comprehended as manifestations of a Will seems conspicuously contradictory. However, the *Ding-an-sich* must ultimately be the foundation for even the appearance of inanimate objects, for otherwise they would be nothing but hollow phantasmagoria, i.e. figments of the subject's imagination; thus Schopenhauer (1889b: 309) insists that nature in its entirety is to be comprehended as a manifestation of the Will:

[75] Here, of course, it would be senseless to postulate a "death drive", given that the Will is said to be perpetually directed towards life: "*Was der Wille will immer das Leben ist*" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 275; cf. also, Cartwright, 2005: 187).

> "[…] I am the first who has asserted that a *Will* must be attributed to all that is lifeless and inorganic."

And again, in the second volume of *Die Welt*, Schopenhauer (1969b: 296-297) states:

> "[…] an essential point of my teaching is that the phenomenal appearance of a *Will* is as little tied to life and organisation as it is to knowledge, and that therefore the inorganic also has a Will, whose manifestations are all its fundamental qualities that are incapable of further explanation […]."

Now, it is evident that this must necessarily be the case for "matter itself is only perceptibility of the [*Ding-an-sich*]" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 309), which, of course, Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) has identified as Will. Thus, it follows that every phenomenal appearance, including inorganic matter, must in essence be identical with the Will found in oneself. But the primary objection to this identification, as I see it, is generated by Schopenhauer's (1969a: 274) claim that the term "*Wille-zum-Leben*" can be used as a synonym for "Will":

> "We have […] called the phenomenal world the mirror, the objectivity of the Will; and as what the Will wills is always life [*was der Wille will immer das Leben ist*], just because this is nothing but the presentation of that willing for the [appearance], it is immaterial and a mere pleonasm if, instead of simply saying 'the Will', we say 'the Will-to-[Life]'."

Now if the Will is synonymous with the term *Wille-zum-Leben* a conspicuous contradiction arises when the term is applied to the inorganic realm. In short, how can that which is *not* alive be said to possess a Will directed towards the continuation of life? Such a claim, in the last analysis, is evidently meaningless in so far as it amounts to a *contradictio in terminis*. Thus, I observe that in his discussion of the Will manifesting itself in inorganic nature Schopenhauer (1969b: 297-298) consciously avoids utilising the contradictory term "*Wille-zum-Leben*" in connection therewith; however, in no way does his omission resolve the difficulty. In light of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 274) claim that the Will perpetually wills life and is therefore synonymous with term "*Wille-zum-Leben*", one would justifiably think that he ought not to have extended the Will to the inorganic, i.e. lifeless, realm. But in this way, a categorical dichotomisation between the organic and inorganic would appear and the "inner essence" of the latter would remain utterly mysterious. Thus, in spite of the serious

difficulty generated by Schopenhauer's (1969a: 274) assertion that the Will is perpetually directed towards *life*, I acknowledge three arguments in favour of the extension of the Will to inanimate phenomena, viz., (i) the *Ding-an-sich* as the substratum of all phenomenal appearances, (ii) the analogical argument and (iii) metaphysics as the foundation of scientific knowledge (Young, 2005: 75-76).

4.8.1. The *Ding-an-sich* as the Substratum of All Phenomenal Appearances

Firstly, it must be acknowledged, as was done in an earlier discussion, that the appearance of real inanimate objects intimates that they correspond to something external from the mind, i.e. they must emanate from something genuinely "*out there*". For if there is not an external substratum to ground the perceptions of those inanimate objects they must ultimately be figments of the subject's imagination, i.e. indistinguishable from hallucinations, and consequently unreal. But if, following Schopenhauer (1969a: 112-113), we argue that the *principium individuationis* is mind-dependent then it necessarily follows that the mysterious mind-independent reality which underlies all phenomenal appearances must consequently be a unity, as Schopenhauer (1969a: 113) acknowledges.

It follows therefrom that the substratum of all objects is one and the same; and thus, whatever I discover it to be in myself must accord with the way in which it exists in other objects. This is the most fundamental argument for extending the Will to inanimate objects, but ultimately it depends on the veracity of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 112-113) claim that time and space do not apply to the world as it is in-itself. In the first section of my exposition, however, I attempted to illustrate that the existence of multifarious forms in the phenomenal world intimates that there must be such variance in the world as it is in-itself, for otherwise one would have to illustrate how and why the mind presents the objects it does – many of which are harrowing and threatening. I shall shortly return to this matter in connection with Schopenhauer's (1969a: 127-130) problematical postulation of Platonic Ideas. In short, I shall argue that the Platonic Ideas do not resolve this difficulty but merely add a further complication to Schopenhauer's system.

4.8.2. The Analogical Argument

The analogical argument for the extension of the Will, which has already been discussed in connection with the refutation of theoretical egoism (solipsism), is closely related to the aforementioned argument for the extension of the Will to inanimate objects. To briefly recapitulate the essence of the argument, it maintains that the bodies of other phenomena are analogous to the only object one knows in a dualistic manner, viz., one's own body: thus, just as one's own body is known from the external perspective as an appearance and by way of introspection as a *volitional* entity (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100), the analogical argument holds that all other bodies – by analogy – are likewise both appearance and Will simultaneously. The obvious difficulty with the analogical argument is that one cannot know for certain whether the analogy is correct, for it may be – especially upon a multidimensional interpretation of the *Ding-an-sich* (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 196-197) – that the essence of inanimate objects is vastly dissimilar to that of animate creatures. In response to this criticism, however, I observe that this possibility would violate what I shall refer to as "the principle of continuity", which, according to my meaning, maintains that there must be an element of continuity throughout nature; hence the principle of continuity declares that: *natura non facit saltus*;[76] an adage Schopenhauer (1969b: 296) is fond of quoting. As a consequence thereof, the reluctance to extend the Will to inanimate nature violates the principle of continuity by creating, as Julian Young (2005: 75) notes, "a sharp division between the organic and inorganic".

But now we must enquire as to the admissibility of utilising the law of continuity in connection with the Schopenhauerian philosophy. Let us commence the discussion by noting that Darwin (2009b: 689) utilised the principle of continuity in his revolutionary work *On the Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection*.[77] Therein Darwin (2009b: 676-677) argues that every mutation within nature occurs by means of a gradual process of evolution: although it may be extremely difficult, if not impossible – owing to the extinction of intermediate creatures and the imperfect state of the fossil record – to

[76] "Nature makes no jumps".

[77] Cf. chapter VI, *Difficulties on Theory*, in the first edition of the work (1859).

delineate the gradual evolution of creatures, nature does not produce colossal bounds between one generation and the next. Thus Darwin (2009b: 689) states:

> "[…] Natural selection can act only by taking advantage of slight successive variations; she can never take a leap, but must advance by the shortest and slowest steps."

Now if we compare Darwin's understanding of the way in which creatures evolve with that of Schopenhauer's (1974b: 152) form of evolutionism, viz., *generatio in utero heterogeneo*,[78] we will at once be utterly surprised that Schopenhauer (1969b: 296) could have approvingly quoted the dictum *natura non facit saltus*; for Schopenhauer's form of evolutionism assumes the existence of tremendous leaps within nature. In short, Schopenhauer's (1974b: 152) evolutionism maintains that one distinct species can produce, by way of an egg or a uterus, an entirely distinct species! That, for instance, a snake emerged from the egg of a fish or that a whale emerged from the egg of a turtle (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 153) is, in fact, a flagrant violation of the principle of continuity. We cannot, therefore, take Schopenhauer's (1969b: 296) insistence on the aforementioned principle as an argument in favour of extending the Will to inorganic nature, as Young (2005: 75) attempts to do. In other words, one cannot invoke the principle of continuity, viz., *natura non facit saltus*, in an attempt to extend the Will to inanimate objects, when Schopenhauer (1974b: 153) so blatantly violates the principle in connection with his particular form of evolutionism. Of course, I do not mean to portend that the principle of continuity is incompatible with the Schopenhauerian philosophy; however, I wish only to illustrate that one cannot arbitrarily assume and then discard a principle at whim, one must remain consistent. Thus, if the principle of continuity is accepted then Schopenhauer's evolutionism must be rejected or *vice versa*.[79]

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[78] "Generation in the uterus of a different kind". I refer the reader to the later section on evolution as a refutation of radical idealism for a more detailed discussion on this particular topic.

[79] The former option may in fact appear congenial, for one may feel that Schopenhauer ought to have rejected his evolutionism in favour of Darwin's. However, in the second part of my exposition I argue that radical idealism is utterly incompatible with all forms of evolutionism; thus, the only way in which Schopenhauer's primary thesis (which is dependent on the radical

However, the aforementioned criticism notwithstanding, it is also highly doubtful that the analogical argument shall convince most that the Will does indeed inhere in inorganic phenomena for, as mentioned, the imputation that inanimate objects possess a Will-to-Life (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 274) is conspicuously contradictory and bizarre; I mention it, therefore, solely for the sake of meticulousness.

4.8.3. Metaphysics as the Foundation of Scientific Knowledge

The third argument propounded for the extension of the Will is more complicated – in short, it concerns what I have referred to as establishing metaphysics as the foundation of scientific knowledge. In connection with the discussion on Schopenhauer's selection of the word "Will", we have seen that, for Schopenhauer (1889b: 219), the fundamental concepts utilised by physical scientists in their theories about the world are *qualitates occultae*, i.e. "necessary but scientifically inexplicable elements of scientific explanations of the world" (Cartwright, 2005: 52); these are essentially *metaphysical* postulates which every physical explanation requires given that the phenomenal world is a manifestation of the metaphysical. But Schopenhauer's point is far more fundamental than I intimated in the foregoing discussion: he (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 296) claims that every *law of nature* is essentially an expression of the metaphysical Will. This is an odd pronouncement in so far as a law of nature may essentially appear to be a particular causal relation between two properties or objects: one says, for instance, that water freezes at zero degrees Celsius – here, a necessary and universal *causal* connection is assumed to exist between that of temperature and the solidification of water. Now it will be remembered that causality is said by Schopenhauer (1889a: 66) to be a synthetic *a priori* mechanism of the mind; hence it is justifiable to assume that Schopenhauer would have attempted to propound a thesis in which laws of nature – understood here as particular instantiations of the causal law – are comprehended as

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idealist claim that the world *in toto* is mind-dependent) can be salvaged is to utterly reject all forms of evolutionism. But in so doing, it seems to me that Schopenhauer's theory would be left with the difficulty of attempting to explicate the existence of multitudinous forms. In other words, why has the metaphysical Will brought into existence the creatures that presently exist and not others?

emanations of the mind. Indeed, as Richard Taylor (1967b: 61) notes in his article *Causation* in the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, "there is, obviously, a close connection between statements expressing causal connections and those expressing laws of nature, and it is therefore natural to suppose that the former might be explained in terms of the latter" – or, we might add, *vice versa*. Surprisingly, however, Schopenhauer (1969a: 130) does not do this, but seeks instead to ground laws of nature upon a metaphysical foundation. Thus, he (Schopenhauer 1969a: 131) explicitly states:

> "[…] the force itself is by no means effect of a cause, or a cause of an effect. […] The force itself lies entirely outside the chain of causes and effects, which presupposes time, since it has meaning only in reference thereto; but the force lies also outside time. The individual change always has as its cause yet another change just as individual, and not the force of which it is the expression. For that which always endows a cause with efficacy, however innumerable the times of its appearance may be, is a force of nature. As such, it is groundless, i.e. it lies entirely outside the chain of causes, and generally outside the province of the principle of sufficient reason […]."

As such "laws of nature" are not to be construed as particular instantiations of the *principium fiendi* (the principle of sufficient reason of becoming); instead they are, according to Schopenhauer (1969a: 131), to be conceived as independent of the principle of sufficient reason and thus directly emanating from the Will as *Ding-an-sich*. Schopenhauer (1889b: 309) therefore claims that all laws of nature are ultimately to be construed as manifestations of the metaphysical Will:

> "[…] Let us consider attentively and observe the powerful, irresistible impulse with which masses of water rush downwards, the persistence and determination with which the magnet always turns back to the North Pole, the keen desire with which iron flies to the magnet, the vehemence with which the poles of the electric current strive for reunion, and which, like the vehemence of human desires, is increased by obstacles. Let us look at the crystal being rapidly and suddenly formed with such regularity of configuration; it is obvious that this is only a perfectly definite and precisely determined striving in different directions constrained and held firm by coagulation. Let us observe the choice with which bodies repel and attract one another, unite and separate, when set free in the fluid state and released from the bonds of rigidity. Finally, we feel directly and immediately how a burden, which hampers our body by

> its gravitation towards the Earth, incessantly presses and squeezes this body in pursuit of its one tendency. If we observe all this, it will not cost us a great effort of the imagination to recognize once more our own inner nature, even at so great a distance. It is that which in us pursues its ends by the light of knowledge, but here, in the feeblest of its phenomena, only strives blindly in a dull, one-sided, and unalterable manner. Yet, because it is everywhere one and the same – just as the first morning dawn shares the name of sunlight with the rays of the full midday sun – it must in either case bear the name of *Will*. For this word indicates that which is the being-in-itself of [everything] in the world, and is the sole kernel of every phenomenon."
>
> "[…] Matter itself is only the perceptibility of the phenomenon of the Will. Therefore we are compelled to recognize *volition* in every effort or tendency which proceeds from the nature of a material body, and properly speaking constitutes that nature, or manifests itself as phenomenon by means of that nature; and there can consequently be no matter without manifestation of Will. The lowest and on that account most universal manifestation of Will is *gravity*, wherefore it has been called a primary and essential property of matter."[80]

Although this may at first appear a rather odd endeavour, i.e. to argue that the laws of nature and matter itself are manifestations of a metaphysical Will, there is, of course, a significant reason for it: the phenomenal world is a manifestation of the world as it is in-itself and hence, in Schopenhauer's (1889b: 218-219) estimation, the union of philosophy (metaphysics) and science is capable of supplying an exhaustive account of the universe:

> "For, in pursuing its own road, Physics, i.e., Natural Science as a whole, must in all its branches finally come to a point where physical explanation ceases. Now this is precisely the *Metaphysical*, which Natural Science only apprehends as the impassable barrier at which it stops short and henceforth abandons its subject to Metaphysics."

[80] It is evident, and understandable, that Schopenhauer construed gravity in Newtonian terms, i.e. as "a *force* of attraction" (Stuart, 2018: 31). As such gravity appeared to Schopenhauer to be a *qualitas occulta* in need of further metaphysical clarification. Given that it does not require the postulation of volitional activity, I conjecture that Schopenhauer would not have been overly enthusiastic about Einstein's theory of general relativity.

In short, a force or law of nature is essentially a *metaphysical entity* undiscoverable by physical science, which is solely concerned with aetiological explanations (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 125) and consequently remains bound to the principle of sufficient reason and its appearance. Only philosophy, which has as its concern the unconditioned (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 125), i.e. that which transcends the principle of sufficient reason, can offer a cogent explanation of the concept of a force or law of nature. It ought to be known by now that, for Schopenhauer (1969a: 131), the closest and most immediate solution to this enigma is found in the concept of the Will, which is said to constitute the essence of all nature. In this way Schopenhauer considers his philosophy to be complementary to natural science, in so far as it elucidates that which is perpetually shrouded in mystery to the natural scientist. Thus, in its ability to elucidate that which is extremely mysterious we discover an argument for the extension of the Will.

Hence, the scientist who neglects metaphysics is as ignorant as the metaphysician who disregards scientific discoveries – for both, working in unison, compliment and complete each other. In this sense, we may expropriate a famous Kantian adage by stating that, for Schopenhauer, metaphysics without science is empty; whereas science without metaphysics is blind. For, on the one hand, science is concerned solely with appearances and is thus, by its very nature, limited to the experienceable, which is always finite; whereas, philosophy on the other hand, is concerned with the investigation of metaphysical phenomena, which, if ungrounded in empirical investigations, is capable of soaring into the utterly absurd.[81] The combination of the two working in unison, however, is, according to Schopenhauer (1889b: 218-219), capable of guiding the mind towards ultimate Truth. Now, I maintain that there is certainly merit in Schopenhauer's view of science being founded upon inscrutable *qualitates occultae*, for although some foundational phenomena (such as the mysteries of gravity and light) have been sufficiently explicated since Schopenhauer's era, there remain, even at the present moment, inscrutable hypothetical entities, such as, for instance, "dark energy", "dark matter", and the "singularity" in a blackhole – i.e., unknown, enigmatic conceptualisations, which ultimately stand for *ignoramus* ("we do

[81] One is reminded here of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 272) insistence upon his philosophy being immanent as opposed to transcendent (Cartwright, 2005: 87).

not know") – which scientists are coerced to postulate in order to explicate the universe based on current theories of the genesis thereof. Therefore, one should not hastily dismiss Schopenhauer's remarks regarding science as antiquated, for there is still much wisdom to be obtained from them, even if the concepts he utilised as illustrations are now better understood and consequently appear to us outmoded.

Yet in spite of my concurrence with and adulation of Schopenhauer's (1889b: 219) notion that physical science necessarily contains inscrutable elements within it, I cannot refrain from acknowledging that it seems to me that one of his (Schopenhauer: 1969a: 100) greatest blunders is to be found in his view that metaphysics[82] – and, in particular, the introspective method – is capable of supplying knowledge unobtainable by empirical, i.e. objective, forms of investigation. In short it seems nonsensical to speak of knowledge of something which transcends the possibility of all knowledge; for to know something presupposes the conditions whereby knowledge is obtained and one must remember that knowledge (if it can even be called that) of the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is impervious to and transcends the principle of sufficient reason. Thus the claim that the Will is the *Ding-an-sich* must, in the last analysis, either be phenomenal knowledge or, worse, utterly absurd and meaningless.

I may be permitted to linger a while longer on this significant matter; for I wish to stress that it is not solely Schopenhauer's term which is problematical; but, moreover, the dichotomisation between introspective and extrospective forms of knowledge, the

[82] Closely related to this criticism is the view that mysticism can supply transcendent knowledge. This type of knowledge becomes significant in connection with Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine, wherein knowledge of the denial of the Will is said to be accessible solely to those in whom the "Will has turned and denied itself" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 410-412). It is interesting to note that, like knowledge of the Will as *Ding-an-sich*, "[i]n the widest sense, mysticism is every guidance to the immediate awareness of that which is not reached either by perception or conception, or generally by any knowledge" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 611). Thus it would appear that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) most renowned claim is also a type of mystical knowledge in so far as knowledge of the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is said to transcend the principle of sufficient reason; but this raises the difficulty whether such "knowledge" is at all meaningful. Mystical knowledge transcends the very conditions for knowledge (i.e. the correlativity thesis and the principle of sufficient reason) (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 410); it is therefore, in the last analysis, utterly meaningless.

former of which is said to lead to a dubious "metaphysical knowledge". In this connection, it must be borne in mind that metaphysics – like science – is entirely dependent upon the finite human brain. Due to the fact that the brain (intellect) is not, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 176) so eloquently expresses it, "originally destined to enlighten us on the nature of things, but only to show us their relations in reference to our will", it is absurd to maintain that it can transcend its condition and behold the world *sub specie aeternitatis*[83] and thereby acquire knowledge denied to it by the method of science, i.e. empirical investigation. In a later section I discuss this matter in greater detail. However, I wish to emphasize that the assertion propounded by Schopenhauer (1969a: 102), viz., that introspection can supply transcendent, i.e. metaphysical, knowledge, strikes me as utterly unfounded and erroneous: for we cannot assume that the introspective method, which is equally as dependent on the human mind as is the objective, i.e. extrospective, method of the scientific enterprise, is capable of supplying a transcendent knowledge. In theory all phenomena are knowable; but, in reality, the finitude of the human mind limits the human race to what it is capable of comprehending, just as our finite existence limits us to a particular place and time within history; as such it is impossible for us as a species to acquire absolute knowledge of the universe, in spite of humankind's great advances in scientific knowledge; consequently, our ephemeral existences must forever remain cloaked in a blanket of darkness – *ignoramus et ignorabimus*.[84]

[83] "Under the aspect of eternity".

[84] Schopenhauer's view that philosophy and mysticism can supply knowledge unobtainable by way of the scientific method intimates that he was an *epistemological optimist*. However, I acknowledge that there are moments when Schopenhauer (1969b: 287) intimates that absolute knowledge of the universe is impossible: "[…] we cannot understand and grasp a single thing, even the simplest and smallest, through and through, but in everything there is something left over that remains entirely inexplicable to us". I use the term "*epistemological optimist*", which I acquire by way of David Berman (2007: 181), in a somewhat different sense to Berman's original and intended meaning. I observe that Schopenhauer's epistemological optimism contrasts sharply with his ontological pessimism.

4.8.4. The Incompatibility of the Schopenhauerian Philosophy with the Scientific Method

But let us now consider the matter of the incompatibility of the Schopenhauerian philosophy with the scientific method in greater detail. In connection with the foregoing criticism of metaphysics being capable of completing the scientific understanding of nature and the universe, I must observe that Schopenhauer's *modus operandi* is problematical in so far as it does not accord with that of modern scientific procedures. In particular I take issue with Schopenhauer's *subjectivistic*, i.e., introspective, approach in discovering the foundational essence as an acceptable means of solving the riddle of the world. We have seen that, according to Schopenhauer (1889b: 376), one should strive to comprehend the world from "that which is better known than anything, and known to us moreover in quite a different way from all the rest". But, is the self truly known as apodictically as Schopenhauer intimates? I observe that oftentimes our behaviours, fears and desires perplex us as much as, for instance, the origins of the universe. Consequently, it strikes me as odd that Schopenhauer's (1889a: 97) introspective subjectivism should be considered capable of working in unison with *objective* science to supply exhaustive knowledge of the universe; or rather, it seems odd that "we must learn to understand nature from ourselves, not ourselves from nature" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 196). Indeed, it can hardly be denied that Schopenhauer's *subjectivistic* approach seems to clash with science's *objectivism*. In my opinion the difference in the *modus operandi* of the two systems renders them incompatible; for here, unlike in the case of magnetic attraction, the opposite method of functioning renders the two approaches repellent and antagonistic towards each other.

Furthermore, it must be observed that scientific enquiry takes the existence of the external world to be an indisputable fact; whereas Schopenhauer (1969b: 3-4)[85] takes self-consciousness to be the only immediately certain knowledge and he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 17-18) therefore maintains that the world *in toto* is a figment of

[85] "For only after men had tried their hand for thousands of years at merely *objective* philosophising did they discover that, among the many things that make the world so puzzling and precarious, the first and foremost is that, however immeasurable and massive it may be, its existence hangs nevertheless in a single thread; and this thread is the actual consciousness in which it exists" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 3-4).

one's imagination, i.e. "a long dream". It follows therefrom that the two systems are diametrically opposed to each other regarding the existence of the external world. In a later section I illustrate the untenability and utter impossibility of maintaining both a modern scientific understanding of the world and, simultaneously, a radical idealist position by considering the theory of evolution. In short, I argue that if one maintains that organisms evolved over the course of millions of millennia then, it follows, there was a (lengthy) period in which the world (and perhaps even the universe) was devoid of consciousness.[86] But for the radical idealist consciousness is a prerequisite for the existence of the world; hence it becomes impossible to defend both theses: either one must pursue the objective scientific path, or the subjective Schopenhauerian alternative; but one cannot avow both simultaneously without contradiction. Primarily for this reason, I argue that the scientific method is incompatible with the Schopenhauerian system; hence, I cannot in good conscience accept Schopenhauer's claim for the compatibility of science with his subjectivistic philosophical approach; instead I

[86] Schopenhauer (1974b: 140) is fully aware of this difficulty when he states that "[…] it must be admitted that all those physical, cosmological, chemical, and geological events existed even *before* the appearance of a consciousness and so outside this since, as conditions, they were necessarily bound to precede such an appearance by a long interval of time". He (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 140n1) attempts – unsuccessfully in my opinion – to address this difficulty by claiming that "[…] through the lack of any subject, [all those physical, cosmological, chemical and geological events] had absolutely no objective existence, that is, they did not exist at all; but then what does their having existed signify? At bottom, it is merely *hypothetical*, namely, *if* a consciousness had existed in those primeval times, then such events would have appeared in it; thus far does the regressus [sic.] of the phenomena lead us. And so it lay in the very nature of the thing-in-itself to manifest itself in such events". It seems to me that this so-called "solution", which is extremely uncharacteristic of Schopenhauer in so far as it is obscure, unwittingly applies the law of causality to the *Ding-an-sich*, in spite of Schopenhauer's (1974b: 141n1) emphatic assertions to the contrary; for it means that the world as it is in-itself undergoes a process of transformation and thus "*if* a brain had existed at that time [when, for instance, the solar system was forming], then the [specific events pertaining thereto] would have appeared in it". I doubt that many thinking people will readily accept Schopenhauer's argument and I take it to be a further confirmation of my view, viz., that radical idealism is incompatible with a scientific characterisation of life and the universe.

maintain that they are like oil and water: incapable of ever fusing together, but, instead, perpetually remaining apart.

If we pursue the matter further we shall in fact discover Schopenhauer's subjectivistic approach to be extremely *retrogressive*. In humankind's infancy the world was construed solely in anthropomorphic terms: a natural disaster, for instance, was considered to be a punishment from a paternal deity for wayward behaviour.[87] Regrettably, such anthropomorphism (i.e. construing nature in human terms) is rife within the Schopenhauerian system, and hence I would go so far as to state that, in connection with its ability to further humankind's knowledge of the universe, the philosophy is not progressive, but, I reiterate, extremely *retrogressive*. This is due to the fact that it utilises a primitive anthropomorphism to comprehend nature, viz., "nature as an expression of an anthropoid Will" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100): instead of attempting to comprehend humankind as a product of the universe it inverses the matter by considering the universe as explicable by recourse to human desires. Schopenhauer's subjectivistic procedure, whereby he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100) discovers the Will to be the essence of the world, is, as mentioned, incompatible with the scientific enterprise, which strives for objectivity. In other words, science begins with the objective, not the subjective, view. For although it is true that the individual is a microcosm of the macrocosm, it does not follow that the former contains the solution to the riddles of the latter, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 196) emphatically claims. By reducing the world to Will Schopenhauer has unwittingly hurled human knowledge to an earlier – and vastly inferior – state, viz., that of animism.[88] By reducing natural

[87] This infantilism is seen most strikingly in the Old Testament's story of Noah and his ark. It also persists in some of the most enlightened individuals when they attempt to assign moral guilt to one who suffers from some misfortune; for instance: an individual infected with HIV is said to be promiscuous or living an "immoral" lifestyle and so "deserving of his or her punishment", etc.

[88] In his famous book, *A Brief History of Time,* Stephen Hawking (2016: 206) states of animism: "The earliest theoretical attempts to describe and explain the universe involved the idea that events and natural phenomena were controlled by spirits with human emotions who acted in a very humanlike and unpredictable manner. These spirits inhabited natural objects, like rivers and mountains, including celestial bodies, like the Sun and Moon". I maintain that if one were

phenomena to the explanation of volitional strivings, Schopenhauer may be justly accused of furthering Kant's "*Ptolemaic Revolution*" in philosophy (Choron, 1963: 142), whereby comprehension of the world is further reduced to an anthropoid perspective. For, I reiterate, although it is true that humans are a product of nature, it simply does not follow that the macrocosm can be best comprehended by way of the anthropoid microcosm.

4.9. The Platonic Ideas as Prototypes for the Phenomenal World

Now the difficulty generated by Schopenhauer's anthropomorphism is best illustrated by way of his teleological argument of the way in which the manifold organisms found in the natural world appear. This discussion may be taken as another argument for the refutation of solipsism in so far as it construes every bodily structure as a manifestation of the Will. Expressed somewhat differently, Schopenhauer's teleological argument identifies the Will as a *conscious creative force*[89] within nature, fashioning every organism according to the environment in which it is supposed to live. However, I must observe that Schopenhauer's teleological argument generates a serious contradiction within his system in so far as it illustrates that the Will cannot be "blind", contrary to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 113, et al.) repeated assertions that it is. This is significant in so far as Schopenhauer's (1969a: 282-283) theory of immortality maintains that an *unconscious* metaphysical entity survives the demise of the physical body; however, if the Will is found to be conscious then it would appear that Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia is at bottom no different to that of other philosophical and religious systems which maintain that a conscious soul constitutes the immortal essence of a human being. I observe that, in spite of its significance, this matter, viz., the Will's awareness, is hardly, if ever, discussed in the secondary literature on Schopenhauer's philosophy.[90]

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to substitute the word "spirits" with the word "Will" one would have a succinct description of the Schopenhauerian philosophy.

[89] Julian Young (2005: 83) correctly refers to the Will in this regard as "a *designer* of things".

[90] One of the few Schopenhauerian scholars to acknowledge the incorrectness of identifying the Will as blind is Julian Young (2005: 83), whom I hold in high regard.

Now in order to comprehend Schopenhauer's reasons for maintaining a teleological view of nature it must be borne in mind that Schopenhauer wrote in a pre-Darwinian era;[91] hence he could not appeal to the theory of evolution by means of natural selection in his attempt to explicate the natural world. Schopenhauer consequently struggled without the theory of evolution to explicate in his earlier writings the appearance of the manifold, variegated organisms found throughout nature; for how can there exist so many numerous creatures so well-suited to their particular modes of life without the postulation of a purposeful creator? Prior to Darwin the so-called "argument by design" for the existence of God was perhaps the most convincing (Hick, 1990: 24). It seemed to a mind devoid of the notion of natural selection that the appearance of so many organisms so well-suited to their particular environments must be the work of an intelligent designer; for just as, to use an extremely hackneyed analogy, a watch presupposes the existence of a watchmaker, so too must the complexity of the creatures found within the world presuppose the existence of a creator (Hick, 1990: 23-24). The postulation of a deity superficially resolves the predicament of the existence of the manifold creatures found within the world. However, how would a pre-Darwinian who rejects the existence of God, and who had not yet earnestly entertained evolutionary views, resolve the difficulty? One such solution may be found in Schopenhauer's system. Although Schopenhauer did not offer a detailed defence of atheism, he was an avowed and unapologetic non-believer (Edwards, 2009: 173) and he attempts – at least in his writings prior to 1847 – to explicate the appearance of the manifold organisms found in the natural world solely by way of teleology and the Platonic Ideas. It is therefore necessary, before I discuss the matter of teleology in earnest, to re-examine the role of the Platonic Ideas within Schopenhauer's philosophical system in connection with the existence of multitudinous forms in the phenomenal world.

But I must observe that the appearance of the Platonic Ideas within Schopenhauer's philosophy is problematic, for they occupy a peculiar position therein. In the first volume of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969a: 169) explicitly states that the Idea is

[91] The third and definitive edition of Schopenhauer's *opus maximus* appeared in the same year (1859) as the first edition of Darwin's principal work. One should also note that Schopenhauer (1974b: 153-154) incorporated non-Darwinian evolutionary views into his work only much later, i.e. either in or after 1847.

impervious to the principle of sufficient reason, hence "neither plurality nor change belongs to it". But it is also evident that the Platonic Ideas admit, by their very nature, of a multiplicity; for Schopenhauer (1969b: 365) maintains that the Ideas correspond to every natural object, albeit not to "manufactured articles". The latter he contends exist solely in the perceiving mind by way of concepts (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 365), to which no Platonic Ideas correspond. Here, therefore, we discern the first major difficulty with the Platonic Ideas: they are said to be impervious to the *principium individuationis* and yet they admit of a multiplicity or plurality. Now, the fact that there are as many Platonic Ideas as there are natural objects intimates that the former are not – like the *Ding-an-sich* – atemporal and aspacial; on the contrary, time and space must be characteristics of the Ideas and consequently "[they] still do not reveal the being-in-itself of things, but only their objective character, and thus always only the phenomenon" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 364). It is natural to assume, therefore, that the Ideas must be akin to appearances. Indeed, Schopenhauer (1969a: 175) himself seems to characterise the Ideas as appearances when he states:

> "[…] The Platonic Idea is necessarily object, something known, [an appearance], and precisely, but only, in this respect is it different from the thing-in-itself."

However, the matter is not as simple as it may appear; for, as mentioned, the Ideas are said to be impervious to the principle of sufficient reason (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 364-365) and hence they are supposedly not subject to time, space and causality; to which ordinary appearances are susceptible. Consequently, given that the Ideas can be neither entirely identifiable with the *Ding-an-sich* nor the appearances, they must be taken to constitute a mysterious *third entity* within the Schopenhauerian philosophy[92] – they are neither fully Will nor entirely appearance, yet both at the same time. This complication generated by the postulation of the Ideas and their subsidiary role in Schopenhauer's architectonics may justifiably lead one to dismiss them as inconsequential. Indeed, were the matter not pertinent to the present discussion I would have disregarded a detailed

[92] Ergo, Schopenhauer should more accurately have entitled his *magnum opus*: *Die Welt als Wille, Platonische Idee und Vorstellung* ("The World as Will, Platonic Idea and Appearance"); for the Platonic Ideas are neither entirely identical with the Will as *Ding-an-sich* nor phenomenal appearances.

discussion on this topic; for I consider the Ideas to be an utterly superfluous element within the Schopenhauerian system, the rejection of which in no way diminishes from the presentation or beauty of Schopenhauer's ultimate *telos*.

It is generally well-known by even those who have only a rudimentary knowledge of the philosophy in question, that the Ideas find their primary purpose in Schopenhauer's aesthetic theory.[93] As a detailed account thereon is superfluous to our present discussion, I shall not enter into the matter. However, I wish to emphasise a lesser-known purpose for the postulation of the Ideas, which is extremely pertinent. Schopenhauer (1969a: 127-130) first introduces the Platonic Ideas in section 25 of the second book of the first volume of *Die Welt*, wherein he attempts to account for the appearance of the numerous natural phenomena in the world. Now a difficulty I mentioned and took to be a refutation of radical idealism is the appearance of so many distinct objects in the world: why, I enquired, does the mind (from which the *principium individuations* emanates) create the appearance of manifold objects? In my discussion on radical idealism I argued that in order to defend the view one would have to offer a cogent explanation for the mind creating a plethora of such natural objects. I readily confess to the difficulty of such an undertaking and I observe that Schopenhauer does not attempt to resolve the issue in the way proposed by me. Instead, he attempts to explicate the appearance of numerous natural phenomena by way of recourse to the Platonic Ideas. Indeed, it is a curious phenomenon for the radical idealist that the world presents itself as orderly as it does: for if appearances are nothing more than concoctions of the mind we may marvel at the uniformity of the objects it presents to itself. In short, we may speculate as to the reasons the mind presents only certain types of real objects to itself, when, in theory at least, it could present to itself (for reasons we are not entirely cognisant) any type of creature or object. Now in order to resolve this difficulty, Schopenhauer (1969a: 128-130), as mentioned, appeals to the Platonic Ideas; but in so doing the mysteriousness of the matter is, in my estimation, augmented not mitigated. I shall attempt to explicate myself as perspicuously as possible, in spite of the complexity of the matter. We must first observe, as I did previously, that these Ideas are, unlike abstract ideas (concepts), not mind-dependent. In other words, their

[93] The third book of *Die Welt* is subtitled: "The [appearance] independent of the principle of sufficient reason: the Platonic Idea: the object of art" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 167).

existence does not depend upon a perceiving mind for their existence; instead they are said to be *objectifications* of the Will (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 129), and hence they precede the existence of appearances.[94] This is a rather odd notion, for it intimates that, contrary to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3-4) initial assertions, the world does, to some extent, have a mind-independent, pluralised existence. In other words, prior to the construction of the world of appearances the Will objectifies itself as Ideas (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 129); and thus the blueprint, according to which the mind will eventually present to itself appearances, must already exist prior thereto. We can express this complicated notion more simply by saying that the Ideas are essentially prototypes of the appearances, which consequently stand to the former as ectypes. In this way the natural phenomena the mind can present to itself are foregone in so far as the Will has predetermined the general attributes of the species considered as a whole and in general, i.e., objectified as Idea, capable of eventual appearance (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 365). The perceiving mind, then, is supplied with a blueprint (the Ideas) which it utilises in its construction of the perceptible world. In this way the Ideas offer an explanation for the uniformity and limitations of the appearances the mind can present to itself. The way in which the prototypes find actualisation in ectypes is, however, not at all perspicuous.

This is arguably one of the most complicated and obscure aspects of the Schopenhauerian system, viz., how do the prototypes, i.e. the Platonic Ideas, interact with the synthetic *a priori* mechanisms of the mind, thereby eventually producing appearances? To my knowledge Schopenhauer does not explicitly and adequately deal with this significant difficulty; hence I shall attempt to offer an independent explication thereof. Perhaps we are to assume that the Will manifests itself in consciousness as a particular general Idea to which the mind, by way of its constructive mechanisms, posits the appearance of a particular individual of the type intimated by the Will. In other words, the "raw, unintelligible data" which enters the mind from the *Ding-an-sich* is not entirely senseless: it would, on the contrary, be a Platonic Idea which thus supplies the mind with a blueprint of the general structure of the particular natural object it is to

[94] It was primarily for this reason that the Ideas are said to be distinct from concepts. For the latter are abstract representations of the appearances and hence *derived from* experience; whereas the Ideas precede experience and stand to appearances as prototypes to ectypes.

eventually present to itself as appearance by applying time, space and causality thereto. This, however, generates further inscrutable questions; for instance, there appears to be no answer to the question as to the Will's motivation for encouraging the appearance of one phenomenon over another. In other words, for what reason does the Will encourage the mind to present to itself an appearance of an oak-tree, for instance, as opposed to a tree-fern? Why does the Will bring one Idea to the mind as opposed to another? Perhaps, given that the Will is said to be "blind" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 357), the Ideas are supplied to the intellect at random, i.e., without any intentional purpose. However, in the subsequent sections I shall illustrate that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 115) statement concerning the Will's ignorance is, in fact, at variance with his teleological explanation of nature. The appearance of one object as opposed to another seems to be an insoluble riddle within Schopenhauer's philosophy. However, let us disregard these difficulties and continue with our present investigation, which is primarily concerned with an exposition of Schopenhauer's teleological argument.

Now it must be mentioned that although Schopenhauer (1974b: 153-154) later adopted (i.e., in or after 1847) a theory of evolution it was one in which imperceptible alterations leading from one species to the formation of another, did not exist. In this connection it is interesting to note, however, that it is not impossible for one to accept both the Platonic Ideas *and* a (particular, non-Darwinian) theory of evolutionism, simultaneously. However, it must be emphasised that the Platonic Ideas are antagonistic to the view (expressed most eloquently by Darwin)[95] that over millions upon millions of millennia creatures gradually and imperceptibly mutate into different creatures. Such a view was anathema to Schopenhauer's mind, for it flagrantly undermines the Platonic view of nature, which holds that each species is distinct from every other. For Schopenhauer (1969b: 365), every particular species has a distinct Platonic Idea corresponding thereto; thus, although a snake, for instance, can emerge from the egg of

[95] For instance, Darwin (2009b: 913) concludes his masterpiece with the famous words: "Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved".

a fish (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 153) there are distinct Ideas corresponding to both creatures. It seems Schopenhauer could not accept the veracity of the notion of there being numerous intermediate species (some of which with only very slight and imperceptible alterations which would be difficult to distinguish from the earlier parent-type) between that of one creature, such as a fish, and that of another, such as a snake. In spite of this, it may seem, *prima facie*, that even the Darwinian theory could perhaps be reconciled with the Platonic view, for each intermediate species would accordingly have a corresponding Platonic Idea. The difficulty, however, with this attempted solution is that many of these Ideas of intermediary species would be identical – given that they are only general, universal prototypes – and consequently there would be what appears to be numerous replicas of the same Idea. This is inadmissible, for the identical Ideas would be superfluous and we may invoke here the famous dictum attributed to Ockham: *entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem.* Indeed, such a solution would bring into question the very need to posit such prototypical entities; inevitably leading to the rejection thereof. I conjecture, that this was perhaps one of the reasons that Schopenhauer rejected Darwinian evolution; wishing to dogmatically cling, instead, to the antiquated views of Plato. Be that as it may, Schopenhauer's (1969a: 127-130) acceptance of Platonic Ideas is an essential element in attempting to comprehend his view of the way in which the Will manifests itself within the natural world; thus, in spite of the obvious absurdities generated within the Schopenhauerian system by the postulation thereof, it is necessary for one to accept them as extant entities in order to fully comprehend the teleological nature of the Will.

Now, the Platonic Idea, stands, as I have argued, as a blueprint for the way in which the Will shall eventually manifest itself. However, we must observe, that the postulation of the Ideas has not really solved the difficulty of the appearance of the orderly presentation of natural objects we find in the world of appearances. It seems to me that the Platonic Ideas are merely deceptive devices which move the difficulty away from the structure of the mind to that of the world as it is in-itself. In other words, Schopenhauer (1969a: 129) shifts the difficulty of the question as to why the mind presents to itself precisely the objects it does to the realm of the Will, which is said to manifest itself as particular universal Ideas. As we have seen, the objectification of the Will as Platonic Idea, in turn, generates profound complications; but the point I wish to emphasise is that Schopenhauer's postulation of these mysterious entities merely shifts

the difficulty of our initial concern (viz., what is the reason that the mind presents to itself the particular objects that it does, as opposed to others?) to more transcendent concerns (viz., what is the reason for the Will manifesting itself as the particular Idea it does?). At bottom, both are identical and the difficulty remains. For this reason I argue that, unlike Darwin's theory of evolution by means of natural selection, Schopenhauer's system is incapable of explicating the appearance of the particular creatures we find within the world. He attempts to shift this difficulty from the mind (brain) to the Will perhaps because the latter is said to be impervious to the principle of sufficient reason and thus it enables Schopenhauer (1889b: 189) to argue that the Will cannot possess or be attributed a reason for so manifesting itself as it does. This answer, however, will hardly satisfy the curiosity of an inquisitive mind and one would be justified in feeling disappointed at the suggestion that the objects in the world are such as they are due to a *liberum arbitrium*, i.e. "a free choice of the Will".[96] As we shall shortly see, it is possible (upon a maverick interpretation of the Schopenhauerian philosophy) that the Will consciously and purposefully objectifies itself as the Ideas it does. This possibility is founded upon the observation that the Will is not in fact "blind" but that, for pragmatic reasons, it intentionally manifests itself as the creatures it does. Although this view seems to contradict Schopenhauer's (1969b: 357) explicit statements to the contrary, it accords with his teleological view of nature (Young, 2005: 71-73), which I shall subsequently present and discuss.

4.10. Schopenhauer's Teleological Argument for Extending the Will Throughout Animate Nature

In chapter XXVI of the second volume of *Die Welt*, entitled *On Teleology*, Schopenhauer (1969b: 337) notes that "three great men (viz., Lucretius, Bacon and Spinoza) have entirely rejected teleology or the explanation from final causes; and

[96] As the Will is impervious to the influence of the principle of sufficient reason, the law of causality cannot pertain to it; hence by the term *liberum arbitrium* is meant the appearance of some phenomenon (in this case the Ideas) *without* the existence of an antecedent cause. In other words, there may be no answer to the question: "why does the Will manifest itself as the particular Ideas it does?" because no such reason (cause) in fact exists.

many small men have echoed them". Schopenhauer (1969b: 337) boldly claims that the reason all three rejected teleological explanations is due to the fact "that they regarded teleology as inseparable from speculative theology". However, Schopenhauer (1969b: 340) is quick to point out that the postulation of a deity is not inextricably bound to teleological explanations of nature, for Aristotle maintained the doctrine of teleology without knowing anything of a "physico-theology", i.e. a teleological argument for the existence of God. In this, we must observe that Schopenhauer is indeed correct; however, I wish to argue that although teleological explanations of nature do not necessarily invoke the notion of an omniscient deity, they do necessarily assume the consciousness and intelligence of nature – something unacceptable to both a modern scientist and a Schopenhauerian (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 115).

But before I begin my discussion in earnest on the inadmissibility of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 115) characterisation of the Will as "blind", I wish first to elaborate upon the notion of final causes, which is extremely pertinent to Schopenhauer's discussion. Following Aristotle, Schopenhauer (1969b: 331) distinguishes between two kinds of mechanical causality (*principium fiendi*), viz., *causa efficiens* (efficient cause) and *causa finalis* (final cause). The former may be succinctly defined as causes which *precede* phenomena, whereas the latter may be described as causes which *proceed* phenomena. An efficient cause is a cause which produces a change, i.e. efficient causes are propositions pertaining to causes and effects, the former always preceding the latter – it is consequently the form of causality most familiar to laymen and scientists alike. A final cause, however, is a confusing and controversial (Taylor, 1967b: 56) notion in so far as it seems to intimate that an effect precedes its cause; for the notion of a final cause intimates that the concatenation of causes is set in motion solely for the fulfilment of a particular end. Thus, the notion of a final cause assumes – if I may be permitted to express the matter so candidly and bizarrely – that a concatenation of causes is set in motion for the purpose of fulfilling some particular end (effect).

But one cannot imagine the existence of some phenomenon (effect) existing and then assuming the concatenation of causes leading to it; for it appears that, like the so-called "arrow of time" (Hawking, 2016: 164), there is a *direction of necessitation* – by which it is meant that "causes necessitate their effects in a special way in which effects can never be said to necessitate their causes" (Taylor, 1967b: 59). The assertion, for instance, that a cold stone wishing to be heated causes the sun to shine upon it seems

absurd, for in such a case we cannot comprehend how the stone would induce the sun to do so. On the other hand, we find no absurdity in the assertion that the sun shining upon a cold stone causes it to become warm. Hence, the direction of necessitation appears to be as synthetically *a priori* as is the law of causality itself. Therefore, the difficulty with final causes is the fact that, as Julian Young (2005: 86) correctly notes, causality cannot function *retrogressively* and hence the only way in which the notion of final causes makes sense is by way of the postulation of consciousness and purposeful intention. For this reason, final causes are most evident in purposeful human productions: the development of inventions such as the automobile and aeroplane are productions of final causes; these objects were brought into existence for an intended purpose, i.e. the transportation of goods and creatures across vast areas of the planet. The most significant point to be adduced from these illustrations is the fact that final causes presuppose consciousness and purposeful intention.

Unperturbed by the abovementioned considerations, Schopenhauer (1969b: 329) maintains that final causes are operative most conspicuously in organic nature, whereas efficient causes are operative primarily in inorganic nature.[97] It is possible that one of Schopenhauer's primary reasons for restricting final causes primarily to organic phenomena is his rejection of theism: the inanimate world abounds with phenomena that do not seem to admit of intentional creation, such as, for instance, the existence of many seemingly life-less planets in our solar system, such as Neptune, Uranus, Saturn, Mercury and Venus,[98] natural disasters, or the saltiness of the oceans. In other words,

[97] It is primarily for this reason that the teleological argument may be considered a refutation of solipsism.

[98] I have intentionally omitted Mars and Jupiter from this list because of all the planets in our solar system, besides Earth, Mars is the best candidate for the possible existence of extra-terrestrial life. One theory proposed by biochemist Steven Benner (cited by Kaufman, 2013) suggests that because Mars is smaller than the Earth the planet would have cooled earlier, thus permitting the possibility of life to occur earlier there than it did here, on Earth. Perhaps, then, life first appeared on Mars and was transported, by way of a colossal impact by some object, to our planet. As for Jupiter, it may be argued that its colossal size has protected life on Earth from cataclysmic impacts, i.e. Jupiter's gravity draws all large, and potentially lethal, objects away from Earth and into its orbit (Stuart, 2018: 101). Hence, one may argue that Mars and

it is extremely difficult, if not utterly impossible, to explicate the purpose of certain phenomena in inorganic nature which do not seem to have a purpose or utility. However, in organic nature it appears that the whole structure of the organism has an intended purpose: it is structured in such a way as to ensure the survival of the creature in particular and the species in general. Schopenhauer (1969b: 351) is eager to point out that nature – by which he evidently means, the Will – cares solely for the species and not for the individual thereof:

> "But if we abstract for a while from this interpretation that is drawn from our inner being, and confront nature as strangers, in order to comprehend her objectively, we find that, from the grade of organic life upwards, she has only *one* purpose, namely that of *maintaining all species*. She works towards this through immense surplus of seeds and germs, through the pressing intensity of the sexual impulse, through eagerness of this impulse to adapt itself to all circumstances and opportunities, even to the production of bastards, and through instinctive maternal affection whose strength is so great that in many kinds of animals it outweighs self-love, so that the mother sacrifices her own life in order to save that of her young. On the other hand, the individual has for nature only an indirect value, in so far as it is a means for maintaining the species. Apart from this, its existence is a matter of indifference to nature; in fact, nature herself leads it to destruction as soon as it ceases to be fit for that purpose. For what purpose the individual exists is therefore clear; but for what purpose does the species itself exist?"[99]

Jupiter were created with the specific intention (i.e. *causa finalis*) of producing and protecting life on Earth respectively; hence I exclude them.

[99] This last, enigmatic question intimates one of two possibilities: either the Will has no ultimate reason for manifesting itself in the Platonic Ideas – in which case Schopenhauer would be an existential nihilist *par excellence* – or, the Will manifests itself in the species for a particular, albeit unknown, purpose. In both volumes of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer, to my recollection, does not explicitly attempt to explicate the Will's ultimate *telos*; however, in his final work (i.e. *Parerga und Paralipomena*) Schopenhauer (1974b: 321) intimates that the Will's ultimate *telos* is the production of the human, in order to bring about the denial of the Will. This, however, generates a problem of its own, for if the Will always wills life (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 274) then it seems contradictory that it should consciously attempt to bring the human into existence in order to destroy itself.

Schopenhauer (1969a: 115) states on numerous occasions that the Will is "blind",[100] by which he (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 257) evidently portends that the Will is without consciousness and knowledge. However, the claim that the Will fashions the structure of organisms[101] intimates that it *cannot* be unconscious and devoid of knowledge. On the contrary, the fact that "every animal form is a longing of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*] which is roused by circumstances" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 255) unequivocally intimates that the Will must be aware of its ultimate *telos*. To take an illustration, the Will must *know* prior to its formation of the organs that in order for the ant-eater to be capable of catching and consuming its prey it requires "long claws on its fore-feet, in order to break into the nests of the white ant, [as well as] a prolonged cylindrical muzzle, in order to penetrate into them, with a small mouth and a long, threadlike tongue, covered with glutinous slime, which it inserts into the white ants' nests and then withdraws covered with the insects that adhere to it" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 260). In order for the Will to produce the ant-eater's unique physiological structure it must have known in advance the nature of the ant-colony and the way in which such creatures construct their nests: such knowledge certainly precludes the Will from being characterised as "blind"; consequently, in order merely to be honest and consistent, we must reject Schopenhauer's (1889b: 257) assertion that (on his account) "the world is not made with the help of knowledge". For, on the contrary, the world is, according to his system, the product of a conscious and knowing Will (cf. Young, 2005: 83).

But what are we to make of the claim that nature consciously and knowingly brings into existence the natural phenomena that it does? This seems to me to be a non-vindicated infantile anthropomorphism. If we contrast and compare it with Darwin's theory of evolution by means of natural selection we shall find the latter to be superior and thus worthy of acceptance in preference thereto. The reason for this is that, specifically on Schopenhauerian terms, we have no justification for accepting nature

[100] For instance, on page 255 in the work *Über den Willen in der Natur* Schopenhauer intimates the blindness of the Will; and again, on page 357 in the second volume of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969b) states: "[…] On closer consideration, we shall find here also that [the *Wille-zum-Leben*] is rather *a blind urge*, an impulse wholly without ground or motive."

[101] "[…] Every organ must be looked upon as the expression of a universal manifestation of the Will, i.e. of one made once for all, of a fixed longing, of an act of volition proceeding, not from the individual but from the species". (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 254-255).

(or the Will) as conscious and knowing: such phenomena are said by Schopenhauer (1974b: 273) to be entirely brain-dependent and due to the fact that the Will is devoid of a brain we must conclude that it cannot, in contradistinction to the conclusion of Schopenhauer's teleological argument, possess knowledge or consciousness. For this reason, in addition to the fact that we cannot on naturalistic terms attribute knowledge or consciousness to nature, it is logical to reject Schopenhauer's theory in favour of Darwin's; this applies to teleological arguments in general, and thus we can confidently assert along with Spinoza: "*Natura finem nullum sibi praefixum habere et omnes causes finales nihil nisi humana esse figmenta*."[102] I shall now attempt to further illustrate the Will's awareness by way of a consideration of Schopenhauer's theory on male homosexuality.

4.11. Schopenhauer's Views on Love and Male Homosexuality

Before I conclude this section on Schopenhauer's teleological argument for extending the Will throughout organic nature, I wish to offer one further persuasive illustration of the way in which the thesis that the Will is "blind" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 115 and 1969b: 357; 497; 570) reveals a serious inconsistency in Schopenhauer's thought. For I maintain that we can best discern the Will's consciousness and knowledge in Schopenhauer's discussion of the phenomenon of pederasty (a form of male homosexuality widespread in ancient Greece and Rome, whereby a sexually mature man would take a prepubescent boy as a lover. *Autres temps, autres moeures*).[103] It is interesting to note that at a time when there was widespread condemnation of all forms of same-sex love, Schopenhauer – notwithstanding his disdainful remarks on the

[102] "Nature has not set herself an aim or end, and all final causes are nothing more than human fictions and inventions" (quoted in Schopenhauer, 1969b: 339).

[103] Of course, by today's standards, such behaviour would constitute a criminal offence; however, my intention is not to judge and condemn, but merely to indicate a serious inconsistency in Schopenhauer's thought; therefore, one should suspend one's moral disapprobation and focus solely on the way in which Schopenhauer's theory of pederasty undermines his claim for the Will's blindness.

subject[104] – was the first philosopher since the ancient Greeks to grapple at length with the phenomenon of male homosexuality. Now it may be that Schopenhauer wished to discuss this phenomenon owing to his own inclinations, and it is interesting to note that many psychologists and scholars have speculated as to Schopenhauer's sexual orientation. Some, such as Edward Hitschmann (1956: 58), B. Friedlaender (quoted in Hitschmann, 1956: 59) and Bryan Magee (1997: 347), have argued that Schopenhauer must have harboured *latent* homosexual desires, given "his resistance to a union with a woman, to a poor opinion of the female sex, […] his disparagement of the sexual act" (Hitschmann, 1956: 58) and his belief in the aesthetic superiority of the male physique.[105] Hitschmann (1956: 58) also notes, in corroboration of his view, that Schopenhauer (1974b: 449n1) detested beards, regarding them as ugly and bestial; furthermore, that Schopenhauer (quoted in Hitschmann, 1956: 60) referred to himself in connection with his work "in a feminine motherly role, 'pregnant' with his work as a mother with a child" intimates, for Hitschmann (1956: 60), that Schopenhauer was in fact a "passive homosexual". Now although it is interesting from a psychological perspective to speculate on Schopenhauer's repressed sexual orientation as a possible cause of his notorious pessimism (Hitschmann, 1956: 60-61), that is not my intention herein. In this section I seek solely to illustrate that the way in which Schopenhauer (1969a: 108) construed the Will to function within nature intimates that it cannot be a blind and an unknowing entity.

Only in the third edition (1859) of the second volume of his *magnum opus* did Schopenhauer (1969b: 560-567) insert an appendix to the chapter *The Metaphysics of*

[104] For instance, he refers to same-sex love as "a misguided instinct" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 560) and claims on more than one occasion "that only a thoroughly depraved nature will succumb to it" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 565, 561).

[105] In a letter to Julius Frauenstädt, concerning his book *Ästhetische Fragen*, Schopenhauer (quoted in Hitschmann, 1956: 59) wrote:

"A perfect woman is more beautiful than a perfect man, - *quae qualis, quanta!* Here you have given an extremely naïve confession of your sexual urge […] Wait until you have reached my age, and see what you will then think of these short-legged, long-torsoed, narrow-shouldered, broad-hipped, teat-bedecked creatures; even their faces are nothing compared to those of the most handsome youths, and their eyes are listless."

Sexual Love[106] wherein he attempts to expound upon, and thereby offer a cogent explanation to the predicament of the "aberrant, misguided instinct" of pederasty (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 560).[107] A common objection levelled against the practice of homosexuality is that it appears to work contrary to the ends of nature: for, from a biological perspective, the continuance of life – irrational and foolish as that may be (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 299-300) – is of the utmost significance. Each creature must ensure that it produces progeny in order for the continuation of its species and life in general; hence we witness the production of an abundance of progeny, most of which perish in infancy, in many species in order to safeguard the existence of future generations. But the union of same-sex couples cannot naturally produce offspring; hence it would appear that homosexual unions are *unnatural*, i.e. contrary to the ends of nature. Schopenhauer (1969b: 561-562), however, argues that given the ubiquity of the phenomenon – "we see this vice fully in vogue and frequently practiced at all times and in all countries of the world" – it cannot be opposed to the ends of nature; but must, rather, be a fully intended production of nature – paradoxical as that may at first appear. Schopenhauer (1969b: 561) discusses at great length how the phenomenon of pederasty was commonplace in antiquity, and how "the philosophers […] speak much more of this love than of the love of women; in particular, Plato seems to know of hardly any other, and likewise the Stoics, who mention it as worthy of the sage." But the phenomenon was even conventional among many less cultured nations, such as the Gauls (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 561). Moreover, "if we turn to Asia, we see all the countries of that continent permeated with the vice from the earliest times down to the

[106] Interestingly, this significant appendix is omitted from the first English translation of the work, which was done by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp in 1888. It appears that not even the translators – some twenty-nine years after the appearance of the original German text – had the courage to present Schopenhauer's thoughts on the subject. To my knowledge, the first English translation of the appendix was completed by E. F. J. Payne and published in 1958, almost a century after Schopenhauer published on the subject in 1859! Evidently, Schopenhauer's genius was at least a century ahead of the time in which he lived and wrote.

[107] In the second edition (1844) of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969b: 541) made a fleeting reference to the phenomenon by comparing it to the misguided instinct of the bluebottle fly (*Musca vomitoria*), which inadvertently lays its eggs "in the blossom of the *Arum dracunculus*, being led astray by the corpse-like smell of the plant", instead of correctly depositing its eggs in putrefying flesh.

present day, and likewise with no special attempt to conceal it; Hindus and Chinese, no less than the peoples of Islam, whose poets also we find much more concerned with love of boys than with love of women […]" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 561). Schopenhauer (ibid.) also observes, in his typically negative view of Judaism, that the phenomenon was even known to the Hebrews owing to the prohibition of such acts in both the Old and New Testaments.[108] Now, how can a phenomenon so widespread, transcending

[108] Although it is tangential to my primary discussion I wish to state that in my opinion modern homophobia has its origin in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. As I readily anticipate incredulity and opposition to my assertion, I wish to commence my comment with the astonishing fact, which Schopenhauer strangely omitted from his discussion on pederasty, that the Old Testament contains the homoerotic story of David and Jonathan – wherein the latter, we are told (Samuel 18:3), made a covenant with the former "because he loved him as his own soul". In spite of this blatant love affair between two men in the Old Testament, all know of the prohibition pertaining to the love thereto: "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination" (18:22). It is interesting to note that the Jewish prohibition pertains to an active engagement in the behaviour and it also attests to the fact that the Old Testament was probably written over an extended period of time; hence we find such inconsistencies: if the tale of David and Jonathan is older than that of the law in Leviticus we can justifiably assume that same-sex love was once permitted within Judaism, but that, for reasons I shall shortly conjecture, it became an offence punishable by death. Yet why should the Jews, out of all the nations in the world, have come to adopt such retrograde, prejudiced views regarding a natural phenomenon? It seems to me that the Jews had a desire, among perhaps many others now unknown to us, to distinguish themselves from the pagans; thus I conjecture that we find many absurd and highly irrational Jewish laws, such as the prohibition on the consumption of certain foods (most notably pork, shellfish and the mixing of diary and meat products). Modern interpretations which seek to scientifically explicate these bizarre practices, such as that the kosher food laws are "healthier", are utterly erroneous. For why should we believe that a group of non-scientific, indeed primitive, Bedouins comprehended the phenomena of bacteria and viruses or the aetiology of congestive heart failure? On the contrary, the only truthful explanation that can actually be given for such practices is that Jehovah – an authoritative and harrowing father figure – commanded thus; hence his will *must* be done, regardless as to how irrational or foolish such may in fact be. This, of course, is a sufficient reason to adhere to the commandment for a believer of the religion. However, the scientifically minded will not feel satisfied with such an explanation, hence to these sagacious individuals I offer the following elucidation. I conjecture that the Jews adopted many of these irrational and bizarre practices in an attempt to distinguish

both time and place, be considered as aberrant and unnatural? On the contrary, the ubiquity of same-sex love intimates that it is in fact a product of nature. Indeed, we observe how even the threat of death and the most horrendous torture cannot put an end to homosexual practices (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 562), for nature cannot be silenced: *naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret* (quoted in Schopenhauer, 1969b: 562).[109] We witness throughout the annals of human history – our own period included – violent, indeed often barbaric, attempts to silence nature; yet she is such that she perennially reasserts herself, impervious to the religious and political attempts to coerce her to conform to human idealisations. Nature is like an air-bubble trapped within a liquid: she cannot fail but to rise to the surface, no matter how violently one attempts to repress her from so doing. The criminalisation of natural acts, the threat of torture, imprisonment and death, the deliberate attempt to supress the Truth concerning nature in academic institutions and so on, is, in the last analysis, utterly futile. For, like Truth, great is nature and mighty above all things.

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themselves from their pagan neighbours. Thus, on my account, precisely because the pagans loved pork and shellfish it was accordingly prohibited for Jewish consumption – just as, I might add, the pagans (in particular the ancient Greeks and Romans) considered an uncircumcised penis to be far more aesthetically appealing, so the Jews accordingly made circumcision mandatory for all Jewish males in order, so I believe, to distinguish themselves therefrom. In like manner, Schopenhauer (1969b: 561-562) eloquently illustrates how commonplace and widespread the love of boys was throughout pagan antiquity; thus, following a similar course of ratiocination, we may justifiably conjecture that the Jewish prohibition on homosexuality – in itself irrational and bizarre – was motivated by a desire to distinguish Jew from heathen. If the latter ate pork and shellfish, had uncircumcised penises and lusted for boys, the former, in an attempt to distinguish themselves therefrom, would not eat such delicacies, would circumcise all males and sexually pursue solely the female of the species. This Jewish antagonism towards pagan practices is, of course, now entirely lost to us (for there are no longer any great pagan empires); hence we fail to comprehend them as one would have had he lived when these laws were initially formulated. Consequently, I maintain that harbouring homophobic sentiments is as irrational and absurd as are the Jewish dietary laws. No rational, intelligent individual would adhere to the latter, so why should we excuse and condone the former? *Sors de l'enfance, ami, reveille-toi!* ["emerge from your childhood, friend, awake!"].

[109] "Expel nature with a pitchfork, she still comes back" (Payne's translation).

But, in spite of the abovementioned considerations, the characterisation of homosexuality as a natural act appears, superficially, to contradict the aims of nature, which is ultimately directed towards the continuation of life in the species (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 564) by way of the production of offspring. Consequently, if same-sex love is indeed a product of nature it must be cogently reconciled with the ultimate *telos* thereof. Now, I maintain that only the most prejudiced and ignorant individuals would assert that the amorousness between individuals of the same sex is vastly distinct, and inferior, to that of the love between individuals of the opposite sex. In other words, a scientific or philosophical theory on amorousness ought to encompass all forms of the phenomenon, just as theories on respiration and circulation of the blood apply equally to all human beings. There is no reason to believe that at bottom the love between two men or two women is vastly distinct from the love between a man and a woman; for we are all the children of mother nature and thus share common characteristics. Hence, I maintain that Schopenhauer's theory on amorousness, which I shall shortly discuss, may be applied without prejudice to same-sex love, although I acknowledge that its outward manifestation will appear somewhat different in so far as it does not attain the same ends as opposite-sex love, i.e. the union of two men or two women cannot naturally lead to the production of progeny. If, however, we turn to an earnest consideration of the matter, we discover that, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 534), the ultimate *telos* of all romantic relationships is "the composition of the next generation". Hence, Schopenhauer (1969b: 535) maintains that all love affairs, however lofty and ethereal they may seem to one in love, are nothing but nature – or, more precisely, the Will, according to Schopenhauer – attempting to bring into existence a particular individual:

> "The true end of the whole love-story, though the parties concerned are unaware of it, is that this particular child may be begotten; the method and manner by which this end is attained is of secondary importance. However loudly those persons of a lofty and sentimental soul, especially those in love, may raise an outcry over the gross realism of my view, they are nevertheless mistaken. For is not the precise determination of the individualities of the next generation a much higher and worthier aim than those exuberant feelings and immaterial soap-bubbles of theirs? Indeed, of earthly aims can there be one that is more important and greater?"

I maintain that this unconscious *telos* functions as much in homosexual as in heterosexual love affairs; consequently, it will undoubtedly be of interest to elaborate on Schopenhauer's theory. This view, viz., that all love affairs are directed to the production of offspring, led Schopenhauer to an interesting conjecture regarding the science of attraction. He (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 546) maintains that individuals tend to fall in love with those who cancel, or rather "neutralise", their own imperfections, thereby producing – at least theoretically – well-balanced children. Were individuals attracted to those with the same imperfections and weaknesses as they possess, the human race would rapidly descend into abnormality (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 546-547). Thus,

> "[t]he weaker a man is in regard to muscular strength, the more will he look for robust women; and the woman on her part will do just the same […] Further, size is an important consideration. Short men have a decided inclination for tall women; and *vice versa* […] Finally, each individual also seeks in the particular parts of the body the corrective of his own defects and deviations, and does this the more decidedly, the more important is the part. Therefore pug-nosed individuals have an inexpressible liking for hawk-like noses, for parrot faces; it is just the same as regards all the other parts. Persons with excessively slim, long bodies and limbs can find beauty even in a stumpy and exceedingly short body. Considerations of temperament rule in an analogous manner; each will prefer the opposite of his own, yet only to the extent that his is a decided one" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 547).

Hence, an extremely anxious individual will be attracted to one more courageous; an extremely irate man will, according to Schopenhauer's theory, seek a placid partner, and so on. Yet the variance in temperament, which from a sexual perspective proved so attractive, inevitably portends that although the lovers will produce well-balanced children, they will not lead a harmonious married life, for "it seems as if, in making a marriage, either the individual or the interest of the species must come off badly" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 558). The prospect of love beguiles an individual into believing that in the pursuit thereof he strives for his own happiness, whereas, in reality, he is merely the instrument of the Will attempting to bring into existence a well-balanced child (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 557) which requires that the individual seek out a mate contrary to himself. According to Schopenhauer, opposites sexually attract; but the variance in temperament will inevitably lead to discontentment in the life of the

individual; "accordingly, marriages contracted from love prove as a rule unhappy, for through them the coming generation is provided for at the expense of the present" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 557).

Now, it seems to me, as I previously stated, that these considerations must apply equally to homosexual, as to heterosexual, individuals; for, as I mentioned, both are products of nature. However, in the case of the former, the end is, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 560), frustrated for a particular reason, which I shall shortly elaborate upon. For the moment I wish to stress that the attraction between individuals of the same-sex must, unconsciously, be based upon considerations of the production of healthy, well-balanced children. Hence, even same-sex love tends, if we are to make sense of Schopenhauer's explanation of the phenomenon,[110] towards the production of progeny. Yet in the case of individuals attracted to members of the same-sex we must here assume that nature has "misguided" the sexual instinct for a particular purpose; i.e. nature has caused certain individuals to become attracted to members of the same sex in order to *prevent* them from reproducing. The reason for this is that nature, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 563), cannot in this particular instance (for seemingly incomprehensible reasons), make a leap and entirely extinguish sexual desire in an individual unfit to produce children; hence nature must have recourse to an alternative solution: she thus induces same-sex attraction in such individuals, thereby preventing them from brining inferior creatures into existence. Following Aristotle, Schopenhauer (1969b: 563) argues that procreation in youth or old age produces "inferior, feeble, defective, and undersized children". As a consequence thereof, nature has sought to remedy the problem by inducing homosexual desires in the young (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 566) and the old (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 565), thereby preventing them from bringing into the world "human beings who would be weak, dull, sickly, wretched, and short-lived" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 563).

Although Schopenhauer's theory is ingenious and interesting, I cannot neglect to mention that it fails to take into consideration some commonplace occurrences, thereby

[110] For here we must remember that love is, for Schopenhauer, nothing but the desire to beget children: "For all amorousness is rooted in the sexual impulse alone, is in fact absolutely only a more closely determined, specialised, and indeed, in the strictest sense, individualised sexual impulse, however, ethereally it may deport itself" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 533).

failing to give a definitive and accurate description of the phenomenon of male homosexuality. For instance, Schopenhauer (1969b: 565) erroneously argues that "pederasty is a vice of old men […] To the really manly age it is something foreign, strange, and even incomprehensible." However, one may take as a possible refutation of Schopenhauer's thesis the fact that there are many men in the prime of their sexual lives who exhibit exclusively homosexual tendencies. To this criticism, however, Schopenhauer (1969b: 565) responds that "it can only be the result of an accidental and premature depravation of the procreative power, which could produce only inferior offspring; and to prevent this, nature diverts this power". Yet, I retort, we find among many homosexual men in the prime of their lives the characteristics which would allow them to beget handsome and healthy offspring; and, conversely, we witness many unattractive and feeble heterosexual men reproduce. It appears, therefore, that in many instances nature has, upon Schopenhauer's theory, erred. There is evidently a problem with the formulation of Schopenhauer's attempted explication of the matter, such that, unfortunately, I cannot enter into fully; but in my opinion these difficulties attest to the erroneousness of the theory and cannot be easily rationalised away. So much, then, for Schopenhauer's theory of male homosexuality. I may be permitted to observe here that the phenomenon of same-sex attraction (as indeed, of opposite-sex attraction) remains one of the most profound mysteries. Science has hitherto failed to disclose the enigma thereof. Perhaps in this case therefore the dictum I have elsewhere propounded may equally apply: *ignoramus et ignorabimus* (cf. pages 28 and 103, et al.). Although this topic fascinates me immensely, it is impertinent to my primary intention in this section and I shall therefore not enter into an elaborate discussion on it.

However, for our present purposes, I wish only to raise one significant question in relation to the foregoing formularization, viz., how does nature – or more correctly, the Will – *know* that a particular individual is unfit for procreation if the former is said to be "blind" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 570)? Indeed Schopenhauer (1969b: 564) maintains that "a tendency to pederasty gradually and almost imperceptibly appears at about the age stated by Aristotle" [i.e. the fifty-fourth year, cf. Schopenhauer, 1969b: 563]. Surely, then, the Will must be aware and *know* that a particular man is unfit for reproduction at that particular age in order to turn his sexual desires towards boys? Nature, being the expression of the Will, cannot blindly confer homosexual tendencies upon males at random, for in this way she would unwittingly vitiate her productions by

preventing the most able-bodied from procreating, while, simultaneously, encouraging the most infirm of her productions to reproduce. On the contrary, the Will must *know* precisely which of its creations (i.e. at a particular age of life and those unfit for reproduction) should pursue a homosexual lifestyle and which a heterosexual course. Here, then, we discern the most conspicuous proof for the consciousness and knowledge of the Will: it simply cannot be a "blind" entity, as constantly avowed by Schopenhauer (1969b: 570, et al.). I conclude, therefore, that the Will is certainly not devoid of knowledge and consciousness; rather it works knowingly towards the realisation of certain predetermined ends. I shall return to this significant point in connection with the discussion on Schopenhauer's evolutionary views.

In concluding this discussion I wish to draw attention to one final point which has great pertinence to my interpretation of Schopenhauer's doctrine of salvation.[111] In his terminating remarks on the subject of pederasty Schopenhauer (1969b: 566-567) states:

> "[…] [T]he true, ultimate, and profoundly metaphysical reason for the objectionable nature of pederasty is that, whereas in it the [*Wille-zum-Leben*] affirms itself, the effect of that affirmation, which holds open the path to salvation, and hence the resumption of life, is completely cut off."

Now, although I do not wish to anticipate the development of my exposition I feel compelled to discuss in brevity the relation the abovementioned remark has to my interpretation of Schopenhauer's theory of salvation from suffering. To begin with, let me observe that if the provenience of suffering is to be found in the metaphysical Will then a solution thereto ought to aim at the destruction, or at least the attenuation in the potency, of that essence. I have found that the only acceptable interpretation of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine is the unorthodox postulation of a causal connection between the individual manifestations of Will and the Will as *Ding-an-sich*; although this is immensely problematical on Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) account in so far as it assumes that the *principium fiendi* may be applied to the world as it is in-itself – something utterly inadmissible on Schopenhauer's account of the *a priority* of the principle of causality – it is the only way in which the claim that the ascetic saint's essence dissolves upon death can be meaningfully interpreted. For if the Will as *Ding-an-sich* were truly impervious to the law of causality it would not be possible to affect

[111] Cf. the appendix of the dissertation.

a change therein by ascetic practices or otherwise: the essence of the world would continue unremittingly to call forth the ephemeral phenomenon of life without the hope of any salvation therefrom. For this reason I insist on the maverick application of the *principium fiendi* to the Will as *Ding-an-sich*; in this way I argue that the ascetic practices are able to affect a *transcendental alteration* in the metaphysical Will thereby causing it to either expand or contract. Every sexual engagement is, as Schopenhauer (1969b:569) readily acknowledges, an affirmation of the Will, and from the standpoint of my unorthodox interpretation, this essentially portends that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is caused to expand, whereby through the process of *palingenesis* more suffering is brought into the world. However, the birth of every new human individual brings along with it the hope of the possibility of the denial of the *Wille-zum-Leben*. Indeed, for Schopenhauer (1969b: 572), the rational human form is the ultimate *telos* of all nature, for the human alone "is the point where, in the light of distinct knowledge, he decides for the affirmation or denial of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*] […] Consequently, we have no ground for assuming that an even more highly developed objectification of the Will is reached anywhere, for it has already reached its turning-point here".

Thus, paradoxical as it may appear, Schopenhauer encourages the production of children in the hope that they will become enlightened and bring about the destruction of the essential being which manifests within them. On a purely materialistic interpretation it may appear as though merely refraining from having offspring is sufficient in bringing about the end of the world, for if every creature were to desist from producing progeny every species would, in the course of time, become extinct; and because the world is said by Schopenhauer (1969a: 3) to be entirely mind-dependent it would, along with the destruction of all sentient creatures, vanish. However, for Schopenhauer (1969a: 100), such is an illusion in so far as every creature is merely an appearance or manifestation of the metaphysical Will. Hence, the mere abstention from having children is not in itself sufficient to bring about the end of life and its appearances, in so far as such abstention in no way affects the metaphysical Will. It follows then, that even if, *per impossible*, every extant creature were prevented by medical procedures from being capable of producing progeny, the metaphysical Will would persist and in the course of time it would call forth the phenomenon of life once more. Only the denial of the Will is able to destroy the essence which animates all life. This is the primary theme of the appendix attached to the dissertation, wherein I

illustrate that the voluntary chosen death by starvation of the ascetic saint is the sole means of abrogating a portion of the metaphysical Will, thereby reducing (even if faintly) the amount of suffering in the world. I shall not reiterate here the complex argument to be found in the appendix, but I do wish to elaborate upon it from the particular stance of sexual intercourse. For this topic affords me an opportunity to expound my interpretation in a way I was not able to do in the appendix. Given that every sexual act is an affirmation of the Will (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 568) it follows upon my interpretation that every act of sexual intercourse is an augmentation of the Will as *Ding-an-sich*; i.e. every engagement in an act of copulation causes, on my interpretation, the metaphysical Will to increase in size. In this way suffering is augmented. However, as I mentioned, the production of human offspring – although in itself also an augmentation in the Will as *Ding-an-sich* and consequently in the amount of suffering in the world – brings with it the hope of the denial of the Will; for it may be that at least one of these children may one day follow the ascetic path and abrogate the portion of Will which animates his body. Thus, if humans are to engage in sexual practices the ultimate end should *always* be the production of children; because, as mentioned, the affirmation of the Will in the parents may potentially one day be annulled in the child. For every other sexual act must, upon Schopenhauer's (1974b: 318) view, be counted as an offence; in so far as in such cases an individual affirms the Will, i.e. causes the metaphysical Will to augment on my interpretation, without the possibility of an annulment thereof. In corroboration of the interpretation I have here propounded, I refer readers to chapter XIV of the second volume of Schopenhauer's final work *Parerga und Paralipomena*, entitled *Additional Remarks on the Doctrine of the Affirmation and Denial of the Will-to-Live*, wherein Schopenhauer (1974b: 318) explicitly states:

> "[…] through [the condemnation of all unnatural sexual satisfaction] the impulse is gratified and thus the [*Wille-zum-Leben*] is affirmed, but propagation is suppressed, which alone keeps open the possibility of the denial of the [Will]. This is the reason why pederasty was recognized as a grave sin only with the appearance of Christianity whose tendency is ascetic."[112]

[112] It is necessary to mention that this last comment is erroneous, for the Old Testament (that is to say the Jewish religion) contains the most explicit prohibition against homosexuality, viz.,

One can now, I think, make sense of Schopenhauer's remark which induced me to write this section; and I regard my interpretation of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine as indispensable thereto. Same-sex sexual relations – as likewise with masturbation and opposite-sex sexual relations with protection or other sexual acts which intentionally seek to frustrate the production of progeny, such as intercourse *per anum* and oral sex – therefore constitute an affirmation – in my interpretation, an expansion – of the metaphysical Will without the possibility of an annulment of that entity in the offspring. This last illustrates that the metaphysical objection (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 567) is not limited to pederasty, but to all forms of sexual acts which do not lead to the production of offspring; "[…] for through [unnatural sexual satisfaction] the impulse is gratified and thus the [*Wille-zum-Leben*] is affirmed, but propagation is suppressed, which alone keeps open the possibility of the denial of the Will" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 318).

4.12. Concluding Remarks

In summation, we have seen that by way of introspection Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) identifies the *Ding-an-sich* with the Will in the individual; however, his attempt to extend this notion to all animate (and inanimate) objects is extremely controversial. In particular, Schopenhauer's (1974b: 273) insistence on consciousness and knowledge being dependent on a physical brain generates a contradiction in his system as to how the Will, as a "creative force" or "designer" (Young, 2005: 83), produces the manifold organisms found throughout nature, i.e. it would appear that the Will would need to possess a physical brain. In spite of the difficulties raised, the claim that the *Ding-an-sich* is akin to the Will is fundamental to Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia. In the

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in *Leviticus* (20:13) wherein it is stated that "[i]f a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, it is wickedness. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them." According to Schopenhauer (1969b: 170) Judaism is optimistic and consequently not ascetic, therefore Schopenhauer's supposed reason for the prohibition on same-sex love, viz., that it is opposed to the denial of the Will, is conspicuously erroneous. I believe that I have offered a more cogent explanation for this prejudiced attitude elsewhere (cf. footnote 108), viz., that the Jews wished to distinguish themselves from the surrounding pagan nations which did not prohibit, but in fact permitted, same-sex love between males.

second primary section of the thesis I shall attempt at length, by way of numerous cogent criticisms, to undermine Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) claim that the Will is in fact the *Ding-an-sich*.

5. The Unrelenting Struggle of Life

I now come to the most notorious part of Schopenhauer's system, viz., his pessimism regarding life.[113] The pertinence of this section to the primary topic of the thesis is to be found in the identification of the pessimistic view with the metaphysical Will; for in the next section we shall earnestly enquire as to how consoling Schopenhauer's doctrine of athanasia is if the Will is essentially evil. In short, it would appear more disturbing than consoling to be told that the act of dying is a return to the source of all evil in the world. However, I shall not address this concern at present, for the moment let us focus upon Schopenhauer's bleak characterisation of existence and attempt to determine whether or not it is inextricably bound to his metaphysical doctrine.

Although the term "pessimism" is often used in connection with Schopenhauer's philosophy (Cartwright, 2005: 124) it may come as a surprise that in his published writings Schopenhauer never used the term to describe his thought (Janaway, 2008: 319).[114] Nonetheless, "[t]he popularity of Schopenhauer's philosophy is due primarily to his pessimistic *Weltanschauung*" (Hitschmann, 1956: 89); and in accordance therewith Bertrand Russell identifies *pessimism* as one of the two most notable

[113] Although Schopenhauer does not offer a definition of pessimism, we may succinctly define it for our present purposes as the view that suffering is ubiquitous, inescapable and that it predominates in the life of all sentient creatures; which consequently leads to the view that this is "the worst of all possible worlds" (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 325). This melancholic view is based primarily, as I shall argue, on Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich*, i.e. we all suffer *precisely because* we are manifestations of the metaphysical Will (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 315). Or, to express the matter somewhat differently: due to the fact that the Will underlies all phenomenal manifestations the phenomena of suffering and sorrow are unavoidable. In the course of my discussion I shall illustrate that for Schopenhauer (1969a: 312) suffering presupposes a "need or "lack" (i.e. unfulfilled volition) which he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 291-292) holds to be akin to the state of suffering.

[114] As Cartwright notes in his *Historical Dictionary of Schopenhauer's Philosophy*: "The word 'pessimism' only became part of Schopenhauer's philosophical vocabulary after 1827 [i.e. after the publication of the first volume of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* in December 1818], and the only time he used it to describe his philosophy was in a note from 1828 where he wrote that 'my doctrine is pessimism'. (*Manuscript Remains*, vol. III, "*Adversaria*", para. 66)." (Cartwright, 2005: 125).

consequences of Schopenhauer's philosophy.[115] What Russell evidently meant by this was that Schopenhauer was the first philosopher to take the problem of evil as a serious philosophical concern, and instead of dispensing with the issue merely by way of sophisms and paltry excuses (Russell, 1946: 786) Schopenhauer offered a cogent explanation for the appearance of the ubiquity of the phenomenon of suffering.

I observe that theistic doctrines have always struggled to explicate the existence of suffering in a world said to be created by a benevolent deity. For if the essence or *prima causa* is compassionate then the world ought to portray itself as something peacefully blissful, as everything which exists emanates therefrom and ought, therefore, to accord with the source from whence it arose; just as one may correctly assume that a torrid or frigid object emanated from a torrid or frigid source respectively. But, in striking contrast to the theistic conception of the world, we find the contrary, viz., a world full of evil and suffering. As a consequence, the theist must resort to fanciful chicanery if he is to preserve his juvenile dogmas, which stand at variance with reality. One such form of duplicity employed by the theists is that of the concept of free will:[116] for the world cannot be essentially evil given that it emanated from a benevolent deity; hence the appearance of such along with suffering is, it is argued, an anomalous product of human agency. In this way the theistic account maintains that evil and suffering exist due to the "gift" of free will bestowed on man by God: an individual is said to possess the freedom to choose between acting rightly or wrongly; and evil appears as a consequence of the selection of the latter course. In this way is the deity absolved of all guilt and responsibility, thus is his benevolence preserved! Now, in spite of the obvious chicanery at work in the argument, this view may appear cogent to some extent; for murder, theft and other heinous acts of cruelty are certainly the products of human conduct. Therefore, assuming for the moment that people can intentionally act differently, it may appear that evil and suffering do in fact emanate from diabolical

[115] "Historically, two things are important about Schopenhauer: his pessimism, and his doctrine that will is superior to knowledge" (Russell, 1946: 786).

[116] It is not my intention herein to concern myself with the various theodicies which have been propounded; however, it is interesting to note that most – if not all – theodicies share some form of the "free-will defence" (Hick, 1990: 40). In this sense, the various theodicies attempt to absolve the omnipotent benevolent deity of all responsibility by transferring the guilt onto humankind; the members of which supposedly possess the "free will" to act rightly or wrongly.

human actions. But how, then, are we to account for the occurrences of natural disasters and diseases? The primitive theistic mindset is inclined to maintain that even these are ultimately due to human nature (cf., for instance, the story of Noah and the flood in the book of Genesis, wherein we are told that Jehovah induced a cataclysmic deluge in order to destroy wicked humankind).[117] Nowadays, however, the scientific method has revealed the purely *naturalistic*, that is to say *immanent*, processes whereby such disasters occur: only the most intellectually primitive and juvenile among us would ascribe a natural disaster to human agency, i.e. to human immorality and wickedness. In striking contrast, the intellectually mature mind acknowledges that the universe is unconscious, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse,*[118] nonchalant to the moral behaviour of humankind. In accordance with this mature view of the matter, we often witness tragedy befalling those considered morally upstanding and compassionate, whereas many a

[117] "Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the Earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the Earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the Earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them'". (Genesis 6.5-6.7). I may here be permitted to offer my naturalistic account of the Bible. For it must be borne in mind that the anecdotes found in both the Old and New Testaments are the product of a pre-scientific mindset. But in the Old Testament, in particular, nature is personified as Jehovah. In accordance with my naturalistic view, I conjecture that there must have been a deluge in the Mediterranean region in antiquity which destroyed much life (thus forming the basis of this myth); but due to the fact that pre-scientific humans could not naturalistically explicate such phenomena they necessarily turned to an infantile understanding: God – the father – was incensed by certain human behaviours and He therefore punished humanity accordingly. Upon this naturalistic interpretation of the anecdotes in the Old Testament we can understand Jehovah's seeming cruelty: for Jehovah is essentially akin to Mother Nature, which is often extremely destructive – and from our human perspective, "cruel". I cannot refrain, however, from stating that although this myth ascribes guilt to the wayward actions of humanity it unwittingly brings into question the characterisation of Jehovah as a benevolent entity; and thereby undermines the credibility of the contemporary Judaeo-Christian conception of God. For would the truly virtuous not show as much compassion to the wicked as to the good (Luke, 6: 27-30)? In a word: how could a truly benevolent God permit the cruel destruction of the creatures He is said to have created?

[118] "Beyond good and evil".

villain lives a healthy, comfortable life to an extremely old age. In this and the struggle for existence nature incessantly declares her apathy to morality.[119] We must acknowledge, therefore, that suffering and contentment are not entirely dependent upon human agency, that one cannot swiftly and easily dispense with the problem of evil by way of an appeal to the supposed *liberum arbitrium*[120] of the human race. Another solution must be sought. Now it may occur to some, that perhaps the predicament of evil generated within theistic accounts is due to the benevolent nature ascribed to the essence or *prima causa* of the universe: what if, on the contrary, the world is not the product of a loving deity, but the consequence of a daemonic force (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 101), which brought creatures into existence in order to delight in their suffering? Indeed, such a view is capable of explicating the existence of evil with ease. It is along similar lines of thought, which I shall shortly elaborate upon, that Schopenhauer attempts to account for the appearance of evil in the world.[121] For the solution to the problem of evil in the Schopenhauerian philosophy is to be found in the identification of the world in-itself, the *Ding-an-sich*, with the Will. In this sense I concur with Christopher Janaway (2008: 323) in maintaining that Schopenhauer's pessimism is inextricably bound to his central metaphysics. In further concurrence therewith the psychoanalyst Edward Hitschmann (1956: 89) observes in his attempted analysis of the philosopher:

> "The most important argument which Schopenhauer employed again and again in his attempt to rationalise the ill-humour the world provoked in him is the […] blind, irrational, aimless Will which can never be wholly satisfied and knows no resting point."

As a tangential, albeit corroborating, point to the aforementioned claim, I observe that although he does not explicitly deny the existence of the Judaeo-Christian deity in his

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[119] However, I must here acknowledge that it is erroneous to consider life *immoral*, in so far as this presupposes a conscious malevolent creator of the universe (something for which we in fact have no evidence); hence the universe must be considered *amoral*, i.e. apathetic to the joys and sorrows of the manifold creatures which happen to inhabit the third rock from a star called the Sun in the Milky Way Galaxy.

[120] "The free choice of the Will" (Cartwright, 2005: 61).

[121] Schopenhauer wrote in a notebook: "[…] it is far more truthful to say: the devil has created the world, than: God created the world" (quoted in Hitschmann, 1956: 90).

opus maximum,[122] it ought to be noted that in attempting to explicate the ubiquity of evil Schopenhauer does not resort to a duplicitous theodicy; instead he jettisons the

[122] Paul Edwards (2009: 175) notes that "Schopenhauer nowhere offers a formal defence of atheism […]"; however, that Schopenhauer was an atheist can hardly be denied. In his notebook entitled *Spicilegia* Schopenhauer (quoted in Cartwright, 2005: 65) wrote: "whoever loves the truth hates the gods in the singular as well as the plural". It may appear odd, then, that within Schopenhauer's principal work an extensive consideration of the three primary arguments for the existence of God are noticeably absent. However, this omission may be vindicated by the fact that in his doctoral dissertation Schopenhauer does mention and reject two of the three arguments, viz., the Ontological and the Cosmological. As to the Ontological Argument Schopenhauer (1889a: 12-13) refers to Aristotle's distinction formulated in the *Posterior Analytics* which states that "[…] defining a thing and proving its existence are two different matters, separate to all eternity; since by the one we learn *what* it is that is meant, and by the other *that* such a thing exists". Schopenhauer (1889a: 13) then proceeds to quote Aristotle's dictum: "[e]xistence can never belong to the essence of a thing", thereby undermining the central thesis of the modern form of the Ontological Argument which focuses on "the assumption that existence is a property or a predicate [of God]" (Hicks, 1990: 17-18). The fact that existence cannot be regarded as an essential attribute of the deity reveals that "this famous Ontological Proof is really a charming joke" (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 11). As to the Cosmological Argument we ought to distinguish between two aspects thereof, viz., the notions of a *prima causa* and a *causa sui*. The former must be considered an absurd contradiction (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 42), in so far as it presupposes an arbitrary break in the concatenation of causes. Yet, given that the *principium fiendi* is *a priori*, it must be both universal and necessary and admit of absolutely no exceptions (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 46); for why should one assume that the concatenation of causes abruptly comes to an end when the finite human mind tires of imagining the infinite chain of causes? Indeed, Schopenhauer (1969a: 495) states "[…] we cannot by any means imagine the possibility of an absolute beginning". Now the notion of a *causa sui* which, if the attribute of eternal existence is not transferred to the deity, seeks to explicate the origins of God, for like every other object the *principium fiendi* ought to apply equally to the creator. Thus, some theologians argue that the Cosmological Argument implies that "God is the cause of himself"; but this claim is equally as bizarre and contradictory (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 42) as the notion of a *prima causa*, for, in the last analysis, it amounts to the illogical claim that God gave birth – to himself! So much then, for the Ontological and Cosmological Arguments. Lastly, Schopenhauer (1889a: 46) refers to the Teleological Argument, which he (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 46) designates as the "Physico-theological Proof",

existence of God by replacing it with the primordial Will. In this way we can discern the fundamentally atheistic and pessimistic character of the Schopenhauerian philosophy; in fact, I may be permitted to go so far as to say that it is thoroughly incompatible with an optimistic theistic conception of the universe. For, as mentioned, Schopenhauer replaces the omnipotent benevolent deity with a self-deprecating striving, which is ultimately insatiable. Thus, it seems to me that Schopenhauer's atheism is inextricably bound to his pessimism, for in absolutely no way does he attempt a reconciliation of the problem of evil with the supposed attributes of Jehovah. Instead, evil is acknowledged by Schopenhauer (1974b: 291) as a fundamental attribute of the world; for him the *natura naturans*[123] is akin to the source of suffering; in this way the universe is thoroughly sullied with a pessimistic hue.

However, before I commence an earnest exposition of the way in which the Will as *Ding-an-sich* generates discord and suffering within the world I wish first to address Bryan Magee's (1997: 13) seemingly bizarre claim that "[Schopenhauer's] pessimism is logically independent of his philosophy" and that "[n]on-pessimism is equally compatible with [it]" (ibid.), for in addressing this opposing view I believe we shall bolster our argument in favour of the inextricability of the metaphysical Will and

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as "a great deal more plausible" than the Cosmological and Ontological Arguments. It is interesting to note, however, that he (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 46) does not offer a refutation of it in his doctoral thesis, but rather refers his readers to his treatise *Über den Willen in der Natur*, "a work", we are told, "which though small in bulk, is rich and weighty in content". In that particular treatise we discover what I have called, "the teleological argument for the extension of the Will" (cf. the chapter entitled *Comparative Anatomy*, 1889b: 252-280). According thereto, Schopenhauer (1889b: 261-262) utilises the Teleological Argument in his explanation for the way in which the Will manifests itself in the protective, defensive and life-sustaining organs and structures of every creature. Thus, it appears that Schopenhauer did not subject the so-called "Physico-theological Proof" to scrutiny due to its apparent plausibility – but here it must be borne in mind that Schopenhauer was writing in a pre-Darwinian era. Instead, Schopenhauer appropriated the argument in his explication of the way in which the metaphysical Will is said to manifest itself throughout organic nature. Nonetheless, this adaptation of the argument in no way seeks to defend the existence of a deity; instead it is actually utilised as a means to further Schopenhauer's atheistic view of nature.

[123] "Creating nature".

pessimism. There are three primary objections I wish to raise in connection with Magee's aforementioned proposition, and I shall subsequently elaborate upon them, viz., (i) Schopenhauer's declaration that optimism is a pernicious way of thinking; (ii) if the Will does not necessarily manifest itself as something evil then the need for salvation (denial of the Will) is rendered superfluous; and (iii) the manifestation of the Will in the world of appearance accounts for the ubiquity of suffering.

5.1. Optimism as a Pernicious Way of Thinking

Let us commence the discussion by proceeding along the assumption that by "non-pessimism" Magee portends the opposite thereto, viz., optimism. We must then earnestly enquire: is Schopenhauer's philosophy, i.e. the view that the world is an expression or manifestation of a primordial Will, compatible with and conducive to optimism? In an extremely memorable passage in the first volume of *Die Welt*, Schopenhauer (1969a: 326) candidly states:

> "[…] I cannot here withhold the statement that *optimism*, where it is not merely the thoughtless talk of those who harbour nothing but words under their shallow foreheads, seems to me to be not merely an absurd, but also a really *wicked*, way of thinking, a bitter mockery of the unspeakable sufferings of mankind."

If this explicit statement in opposition to the optimistic view does not suffice to answer our initial question in the negative, viz., that Schopenhauer's notion of the Will as *Ding-an-sich* cannot possibly be considered compatible with optimism, I may be permitted to observe here that Schopenhauer expresses contempt for all *Weltanschauungen* he considers to be optimistic, and this attitude can be evinced most conspicuously in his evaluation of the major world religions. Accordingly, in the second volume of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969b: 170) states:

> "I cannot, as is generally done, put the *fundamental difference* of all religions in the question whether they are monotheistic, polytheistic, pantheistic, or atheistic, but only in the question whether they are optimistic or pessimistic, in other words, whether they present the existence of this world as justified by itself, and consequently praise and commend it, or consider it as something

> which can be conceived only as the consequence of our guilt, and thus really ought not to be, in that they recognize that pain and death cannot lie in the eternal, original, and immutable order of things, that which in every respect ought to be."

This dichotomisation leads Schopenhauer to consider Hinduism, Buddhism and Catholicism as expressing the pessimistic spirit (Cartwright, 2005: 125), whereas he considers Greek paganism, Judaism, Protestantism and Islam as essentially optimistic in character (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 623). In *Parerga und Paralipomena* in particular, as Janaway (2008: 321) notes, "there is a demonizing of Jewish thought".[124] However,

[124] Although Schopenhauer immensely dislikes the Jewish religion it is interesting to note that he had a number of Jewish friends, acolytes and admirers. For instance, in his youth Schopenhauer befriended Joseph Gans, a young Jewish student whom Schopenhauer supported financially (Safranski, 1991: 168). In his later years, Schopenhauer was, as Cartwright (2010: 542) notes, devastated by the death of the Jewish lawyer Martin Emden, whom Schopenhauer (quoted in Cartwright, 2010: 542) referred to as his "best friend". David Asher, "who was active in his faith and in Jewish social causes" (Cartwright, 2010: 542), was another friend and supporter of the philosopher, whom Schopenhauer unsuccessfully attempted on several occasions to persuade to translate his philosophical works into English (Cartwright, 2005: 9). Interestingly, Julius Frauenstädt, Schopenhauer's "arch-evangelist" (Cartwright, 2010: 505), who did more than any other acolyte to spread the Schopenhauerian gospel, was in fact born Jewish, and he assisted Schopenhauer in having *Parerga und Paralipomena* published by Hayne of Berlin in 1851 (Cartwright, 2010: 506). This is sadly amusing in so far as *Parerga* is arguably (cf. Janaway, 2008: 321) Schopenhauer's most anti-Semitic work; wherein he comes closest to a racial form of anti-Semitism (cf. for instance Schopenhauer's (1974b: 264) remark that "[the Jews] are and remain a foreign oriental race […]"). Yet, in spite of Schopenhauer's negative philosophical view of Judaism, he had great admiration for Spinoza (Cartwright, 2010: 543-544); and we might expect him to have had an appreciation for the ancient Jewish sect of the Essenes (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 616), who were known to practice asceticism. I would also like to note here that the first English biography on Schopenhauer, published in 1876 and entitled *Arthur Schopenhauer: His Life and Philosophy*, was written by the Jewess Helen Zimmern. Furthermore, both Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud – two of the greatest Jewish intellectuals of all time – expressed great admiration for Schopenhauer. Ernest Jones (quoted in Magee, 1997: 309) relates that Freud "openly regarded Schopenhauer as one of the half-dozen or so greatest men who had ever lived"; while Einstein was purported to have had a

it is interesting to note that although Schopenhauer vehemently dislikes Judaism for its optimism and lack of an afterlife (Schopenhauer, 1974a: 125-126 and Schopenhauer, 1974b: 301) he does not consider it the most reprehensible religion, for, as he (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 580) states: "[t]he myth of the Fall of man […] is the only thing in the Old Testament to which I can concede a metaphysical, although only allegorical, truth; indeed, it is this alone that reconciles me to the Old Testament". For Schopenhauer (1969b: 605) Islam is "the most modern as well as the worst of all religions", "[…] the saddest and poorest form of theism" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 162), and in "words some will find prophetic, others a cause for *jihad*" as Young (2005: 261) notes, Schopenhauer (ibid.) disparagingly refers to the Koran as a "wretched book", which has inspired its acolytes "[…] to bloody wars and the most extensive conquests"; moreover, Schopenhauer claims that the Koran is a book in which he was unable to discover "one single idea of value" (ibid.). Thus, the most detestable religion, according to Schopenhauer (1889b: 377), is Islam; Judaism occupies the penultimate position. But, in essence, both are reprehensible for their naïve optimism.

However, to return to the initial discussion, it is solely the myth of the Fall which, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 620), connects the New Testament with the Old. For the pessimism of the former is utterly incompatible with the "optimistic history of creation" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 620) of the latter. Here, I may be permitted to offer the most concise and succinct expression of the distinction between optimistic and pessimistic religions. The former consider life a blessing from the creator, which ought thoroughly to be enjoyed and prolonged (even in instances in which a pleasant life is no longer tenable); whereas the latter consider life to be a punishment, from which a rapid salvation is to be hoped.[125] Accordingly, pessimistic religions anticipate suffering as inevitable, for they teach that we are, without exception, sinners deserving of such punishment. In this way they are profoundly consoling, for when an evil befalls us we ought to consider it as just and bear it with composure and equanimity. Most

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portrait of Schopenhauer on the wall in his Berlin study in the late 1920s (mentioned in Don Howard's (1997: 87) article, *A Peek Behind the Veil of Maya*).

[125] It is interesting to note that the optimistic religions, in particular Judaism, do not possess complex soteriological doctrines. This is due, of course, to their optimistic attitude regarding existence: there is no need to be saved from a pleasant life.

Westerners, whose minds are regrettably corrupted by the "optimistic history of creation", however, erroneously present the doctrine of *metempsychosis*, i.e. the transmigration of souls, as a consolation for the inevitability of death; whereas for an adherent of the Hindu, Buddhist and Jain[126] faiths *Samsara*, i.e. rebirth, is an occurrence all wish to ultimately avert. But it is to be noted, that, according to the latter religions, in order for the cycle of birth, death and rebirth to be abolished the suffering experienced in one's life *cannot* intentionally be annulled by way of suicide or euthanasia; for the avoidance of pain does not mitigate negative *Karma* from adhering to the soul, and thus is one perpetually rebound to existence.[127] In order to purify the soul of all negative *Karma* one must endure suffering with equanimity; thereby ultimately escaping from the vicious cycle of *Samsara*. In my estimation, this attitude regarding the value of life is the most striking dissimilarity between the religions of the Orient to those religions of the Occident. The Abrahamic religions (with the possible exclusion of Catholicism) are naïvely optimistic, whereas the Indian religions are thoroughly pessimistic. For Schopenhauer the latter are commendable, for they contain profound insights into the nature of existence which, as we shall see, closely accord with his doctrine.

It will be noticed that I have intentionally avoided using the all-encompassing term "Christianity" as a description for the religion of the New Testament, for Schopenhauer's attitude thereto is, as Cartwright (2005: 26) notes, ambivalent.

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[126] Schopenhauer rarely makes mention of the Jain religion; this is due to the fact that he considers it to be essentially akin to Buddhism (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 608). It is interesting to note that many early Oriental scholars dismissed Jainism for the same reason (Gopalan, 1973:1-2); however, it ought to be noted that, among other dissimilarities, Jainism adheres to a far more austere ascetic doctrine than does Buddhism (Wiley, 2004: 9-10). I mention this interesting fact because my interpretation of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine (cf. the appendix) has been greatly influenced by the Jain teaching.

[127] In the words of the Upanishads (Mascaro, 1978: 140): "According as a man acts and walks in the path of life, so he becomes. He that does good becomes good; he that does evil becomes evil. By pure actions he becomes pure; by evil actions he becomes evil." In this way immoral actions cause negative *Karma* to adhere to the soul; thus is one reborn into a life of suffering in accordance with the evil perpetrated in the soul's previous existence(s).

Schopenhauer (1969b: 625) considers Protestantism, which is a revolt against Catholicism, to be a degenerate form of Christianity (Cartwright, 2005: 28), for:

> "[b]y eliminating asceticism and its central point, the meritorious nature of celibacy, Protestantism has already given up the innermost kernel of Christianity, and to this extent is to be regarded as a breaking away from it […] In the end, this results in a doctrine of a loving father who made the world, in order that things might go very pleasantly in it (and in this, of course, he was bound to fail), and who, if only we conform to his will in certain respects, will afterwards provide an even much pleasanter world (in which case it is only to be regretted that it has so fatal an entrance). This may be a good religion for comfortable, married, and civilized Protestant parsons, but it is not Christianity. Christianity is the doctrine of the deep guilt of the human race by reason of its very existence, and of the heart's intense longing for salvation therefrom." (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 625).

In its pessimistic view of life and its doctrine of salvation, incipient Christianity, i.e. Catholicism, betrays its affinity with the philosophical precepts of the Hindus and Buddhists; and, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 623) its pessimistic spirit, its soteriological doctrine, along with the concept of an avatar (in the form of Jesus as the "son of God"), betrays its really Indian – that is to say, Hindu – origins. It may be of interest to note here that Schopenhauer (1969b: 624) also considers Judaism to be a derivation of the Hindu religion – albeit, in an extremely circuitous way. As he (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 580, 623-624) explicates:

> "The Jewish religion resulted from this Zend religion [i.e. Zoroastrianism], as J. G. Rhode has thoroughly demonstrated in his book *Die heilige Sage des Zendvolks*; Jehovah came from Ormuzd, and Satan from Ahriman. The latter, however, plays only a very subordinate role in Judaism, in fact almost entirely disappears. In this way optimism gains the upper hand, and there is left only the myth of the Fall as a pessimistic element, which (as the fable of Meshian and Meshiane) is also taken from the Zend-Avesta, but nevertheless falls into oblivion until it, as well as Satan, is again taken up by Christianity. But Ormuzd himself is derived from Brahmanism, although from a lower region thereof; he is no other than Indra, that subordinate god of the firmament and the atmosphere, who is frequently in competition with men."

Thus it appears that Schopenhauer maintains that all the major world religions ultimately derive from Hinduism;[128] those that have retained the pessimistic element of the former are, according to him (Cartwright, 2005: 125), vastly superior to those which have descended into crude, naïve optimism. Now if Schopenhauer's claim that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* were equally as compatible with optimism as with pessimism, we would not expect to find Schopenhauer praising Hinduism, Buddhism and Catholicism for their pessimistic spirit, while simultaneously disdaining Greek paganism, Judaism, Protestantism and Islam for their essentially optimistic standpoints.

In concluding my discussion I may be permitted to invoke one final observation in corroboration of the view that Schopenhauer's philosophy is certainly *not* compatible with optimism, viz., one of Schopenhauer's primary objections to pantheism (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 643 and Cartwright, 2005: 118). As the term denotes, pantheism maintains that God inheres in everything or, rather, that everything is akin to God. Now if God – as is traditionally done in the Judaeo-Christian tradition – is identified with benevolence, the claim that "everything is akin to God" is tantamount to the assertion that "everything is essentially good"[129] – a proposition which strikes Schopenhauer (1969b: 643) as not only empirically bizarre, but in fact psychologically pernicious, in so far as it engenders a dangerous resentment towards life when disaster, as is only inevitable, occurs. If one would only earnestly open one's eyes and consider this world he would see, quite plainly, that it is not a world of goodness, but one of immense sadness and tragedy. Given the ubiquity of suffering "it would be more correct to identify the world with the devil" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 101) than with a benevolent

[128] By this I portend that if Judaism ultimately derives from Hinduism, then it follows that all the religions which subsequently emerged from it, i.e. the numerous denominations of Christianity, Islam and Baha'ism, etc. are merely (inferior) variations of Hinduism. In the East the matter concerning Hinduism as the original proto-religion is even less susceptible to debate in so far as the antiquity of the Hindu religion is indisputable and it is therefore reasonable to assume that the similarities between the Jain and Buddhist religions and Hindu thought are due to the fact that the former emanated from the latter (Gopalan, 1973: 10).

[129] Schopenhauer (cf. 1969b: 620, 623, et al.) is fond of invoking the Greek adage "παντα καλα λιαν" ["*panta kala lian*"] ("[And God saw] all [that He had made, and behold it] was very good" (Genesis, 1:31)) as an expression of this optimistic view.

deity, and indeed this is precisely what the Schopenhauerian philosophy ultimately intends to do. Optimistic pantheism cannot adequately explicate the ubiquity of evil and suffering, thus "[…] the question of the origin of evil is the incurable disease ever breaking out in [the doctrine] anew" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 643); whereas the Schopenhauerian system is the sole philosophy wherein "the evils of the world [are] honestly admitted in all their magnitude; this is possible, because the answer to the question of their origin coincides with the answer to the question of the origin of the world" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 643). The metaphysical Will is thus undoubtedly and inextricably bound to Schopenhauer's pessimistic *Weltanschauung*.

Yet if this discussion does not sufficiently convince incredulous readers of the erroneousness of Magee's assertion, I shall now invoke two further considerations in my attempt to prove that Schopenhauer's metaphysics is inextricably bound to his pessimism. To this end I wish to consider Schopenhauer's impetus for the ascetic life and his notions regarding suffering.

5.2. The Evil Metaphysical Will as the Impetus for the Ascetic Life

In a later section I earnestly discuss the difficulty in Schopenhauer's attempted solution to the criticisms levelled at his claim that the Will is the *Ding-an-sich*; however, although I will not at present enter into an elaborate discussion thereon, it is necessary at this point in the exposition to illustrate the significance that Schopenhauer's (1969b: 196-197) revised view of his central claim has on his pessimistic outlook and the consequent need for salvation. For it will be recognized that if the essence of the world is not thoroughly evil the need for salvation therefrom is called into question. In short, I maintain that a multidimensional view of the *Ding-an-sich*, one in which the Will is said to occupy merely one facet thereof, erodes the claim that the world necessarily presents itself as violent and evil, and, as a consequence thereof, the need for salvation is rendered superfluous.

For our present purposes it is sufficient to note that Schopenhauer (1969b: 197) was coerced to qualify his view[130] regarding the identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich* primarily in light of the fact that one's volitional strivings can be dated and their duration measured (Edwards, 2009: 170); here it must be recalled that if the Will is to be identified with the *Ding-an-sich* it must be atemporal, for time is said to be an *a priori* imposition of the mind. In acknowledgement of this difficulty, Schopenhauer (1969b: 196) states in the second volume of his principal work:

> "Meanwhile it is to be carefully noted, and I have always kept it in mind, that even the inward observation we have of our own will still does not by any means furnish an exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself."

This seemingly inconspicuous, albeit extremely significant, qualification intimates that the Will is only one dimension of the *Ding-an-sich*; as a consequence thereof there may, perhaps, be many other inscrutable aspects thereto. Now although such an interpretation seems to draw Schopenhauer into a closer orbit with Kant – insofar as, like Kant, it would appear that Schopenhauer is arguing that the *Ding-an-sich* is ultimately impervious to human comprehension – it does tremendous violence to the former's system; for if the *Ding-an-sich* is not exclusively identified with the Will then "there is no reason to expect that the world as [appearance] will present [itself as something violent]" (Wicks, 2008: 131), on the contrary, the inscrutable aspects of the *Ding-an-sich* may be benign or benevolent, in which case the world and life would not

[130] The fact that in the concluding sections of the first volume of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969a: 409-411) argues that the dissolution of the Will in the ascetic does not lead to an absolute nothing but merely to a relative nothing, intimates that the view explicitly propounded in the second volume (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 196-197), i.e. a multidimensional view of the *Ding-an-sich*, was already implicit in the first. However, I refer to the multidimensional view as a revision of the earlier position in order to distinguish it from the orthodox reading of Schopenhauer's most famous claim, viz., that the Will is the *Ding-an-sich*. This view is corroborated by the fact that – save for the aforementioned discussion on absolute/relative nothing in the concluding sections – it does not feature prominently in the first volume of the *opus maximum*.

necessarily manifest as a *bellum omnium contra omnes*;[131] and if the world is not essentially savage then the need for salvation therefrom is undermined:

> "[…] the multidimensional interpretation undercuts the motivation to achieve tranquillity through the denial-of-the-Will, for we deny the Will precisely because our projection of the principle of sufficient reason generates intolerable suffering. A multidimensional conception of the thing-in-itself provides less reason for denying the Will, since it introduces potentially uncountable and inscrutable dimensions that minimize the Will's metaphysical importance." (Wicks, 2008: 132).

Thus it becomes evident that Schopenhauer's metaphysical claim, viz., that the Will is the *Ding-an-sich*, is inextricably bound to his notorious pessimism and, consequently, to his doctrine of salvation. Now if one were to claim that the Will within Schopenhauer's philosophy does not necessarily lead to a pessimistic view of life but that it is equally compatible with optimism, then it becomes utterly impossible to explicate Schopenhauer's reasons for concluding *Die Welt* with a soteriological doctrine. For one would not require salvation from a benign or gleeful existence. Just as we tacitly assume in all cases of intentional suicide that an individual driven to such an act must have been hopelessly unhappy, so here, too, may we assume that a philosophy which culminates in a soteriological doctrine must necessarily view the world in a profoundly pessimistic way. In fact, it is a curious coincidence, and one which I maintain corroborates the argument here propounded, that the religions identified by Schopenhauer (1969b: 170) as optimistic, in particular Judaism, do not in fact have elaborate soteriological doctrines; for upon an optimistic comprehension of the universe there is no need for salvation therefrom.[132] It is only the so-called

[131] "A war of all against all".

[132] For the sake of meticulousness, I must observe here that Islam cannot be taken as a refutation of my assertion; for the Islamic doctrine of salvation – which is in the last analysis nothing more than entering a state of extravagant debauchery – is in fact incompatible with the optimistic view of existence espoused by the religion. Yet when one takes into consideration the fact that Islam is essentially a syncretistic religion *par excellence*, deriving its doctrines from a plethora of sources such as Judaism, Arab Paganism, Christianity, Manichaeism (Bell, 1958: 13) and so forth, one can hardly be surprised at the manifold contradictions inherent in

"pessimistic religions", viz., Hinduism, Buddhism and genuine Christianity, i.e. Catholicism, that advance complex soteriological doctrines in an attempt to assist votaries in escaping the nightmare of existence.

It is evident, then, that, contrary to Magee's assertion, Schopenhauer would not have wished for his philosophy to be construed in optimistic terms. However, the term "non-pessimism" is, to my mind, intentionally vague; for it may not necessarily imply the opposite of pessimism. Hence, by that misleading term Magee may have had in mind the notion that Schopenhauer's philosophy is *independent* of both optimism and pessimism, for as he (Magee, 1997: 13) states: "[…] it is an elementary point in logic that no truth claim can entail a value-judgment"; in other words, no objective claim can contain within itself "goodness" or "evilness". This calls to mind the scientific method wherein absolute objectivity is a necessary precondition thereof. Therefore, we must acknowledge that from a *scientific* perspective, "optimism and pessimism are alike objectionable: optimism assumes, or attempts to prove, that the universe exists to please us, and pessimism that it exists to displease us. Scientifically, there is no evidence that it is concerned with us either one way or the other. The belief in either pessimism or optimism is a matter of temperament, not of reason […]" (Russell, 1946: 787).[133] Hence, it is often assumed that Schopenhauer's philosophy is highly idiosyncratic and psychologically revealing in so far as it ascribes (i.e. in the parlance of psychoanalysis, that it *projects*) a negative psychological mood onto the objectively neutral world (Hitschmann, 1956: 46, 79).[134] However, should we impute scientific principles and standards to a *Lebensphilosophie*? Here we must enquire as to whether Schopenhauer's philosophy can be characterised as scientific in any sense of the word, as Magee (1997: 13) tacitly appears to assume by his vague expression. First, we must acknowledge that like the scientific enterprise Schopenhauer's system attempts to illuminate the mysteries of the universe and existence; however, it differs from the former in so far as

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it. The Islamic doctrine of salvation may be considered a futile attempt to reconcile the optimism of Judaism with the pessimism of incipient Christianity.

[133] I assume, in what follows, that a happy life is worth living, whereas an unhappy life is not.

[134] As Edward Hitschmann (1956: 90) states: "Nowhere else can the strict subjectivity of a *Weltanschauung* be seen more clearly than in the optimistic or pessimistic attitude that the individual adopts towards the world. It becomes obvious that pessimism is not really a *Weltanschauung* but a mood – or to call it by its proper name, a depressive mood."

it offers a single solution to the problems thereto, i.e. the world is said to be in essence an expression of the unified metaphysical Will. Furthermore, in contrast to the *modus operandi* of the scientific method which strives (in vain) for absolute objectivity, Schopenhauer's philosophy attempts to comprehend nature by way of the self (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 196). And, even more troubling, Schopenhauer's *magnum opus* concludes with extremely religious jargon: for he propounds at length a soteriological doctrine, utilising such terms as "salvation", "liberation", "sin", etc.; in this, I maintain, we discern most conspicuously Schopenhauer's religiosity, in spite of his atheism. Significantly, these considerations intimate that Schopenhauer's philosophy cannot be considered scientific in the strict sense of the word. Indeed, as Edward Hitschmann (1956: 55) states in his psychoanalytic study of the philosopher: "[Schopenhauer's life's work] was to be a philosophy not scientifically constructed but created through an intuitive view of the world, a work of art rather than a work of science". I take these considerations as evidence that one ought not construe Schopenhauer's philosophy as a scientific description of the universe, for – although Schopenhauer (1974b: 3) hoped that his metaphysics would complete and compliment the scientific method – his system is extremely subjectivistic, which stands in striking contrast to the scientific pursuit for absolute objectivity.

Perhaps if Schopenhauer had been more scientifically, i.e. objectively, minded he would have arrived at a similar theory to that of Darwin's notion of evolution by means of natural selection. However, I conjecture, that his religiosity was such that it coerced him to take a subjectivistic view of the world and existence, in contradistinction to an objective consideration of the way in which suffering propels creatures to adapt in their struggle for mere existence. This is an extremely significant point, for in a later section I attempt to argue that from the subjectivistic perspective it is extremely difficult – if not utterly impossible – to construe existence in optimistic terms, for the course of life necessarily entails the sufferings of sickness, old age and death. For the sake of persuasion, however, I shall anticipate in more concise form the argument to be encountered later.

The scientific method is, by its very nature, *objectivistic*: hence, the scientist ought not compassionately engage with the sufferings of the living creatures he wishes to study and observe. For instance, unless he were utterly diabolical, i.e. unless he delighted in the sufferings of helpless creatures, we must assume that the psychologist Harry Harlow

was a scientist in the true sense of the word, for he conducted experiments on helpless infant rhesus monkeys in spite of the great psychological trauma caused thereby to those creatures. From a *scientific perspective* I concur with Russell (1946: 787) in maintaining the matter as to whether existence is conducive to our happiness or unhappiness to be utterly impertinent, for in essence the scientific method seeks to augment knowledge and decrease ignorance – its purpose is not – although I admit that it is often used in this way by humanity – to increase happiness and mitigate suffering. The genuine scientist is, like nature, an *amoral* individual seeking solely to understand and augment his knowledge; he strives for this goal by fair means or foul: the end, for him, justifies the means whereby that goal is attained. Primarily for this reason the acquisition of scientific knowledge often entails the terrible suffering of creatures used for experimental purposes, whereby the scientist satiates his desire for knowledge. It is not that these individuals in pursuit of knowledge for knowledge's own sake are cruel, they merely assume an entirely objectivistic stance and consequently do not consider the subjective agony of their experimental subjects. However, from the subjective point of view, i.e. from the perspective of a living creature, the matter of suffering and the question as to whether or not our existence is worth the effort with which we necessarily keep it in motion is not an impertinent one. When the experimental scientist cages a helpless animal and performs a procedure whereby the animal is made to suffer he does not imagine what it must be like *to be* that creature: he merely pursues his intellectual goals without any regard to the subjectivistic stance, i.e. the personal sufferings, of the creature undergoing the heinous experiments. If, however, the scientist were to descend to the view of the suffering creature, if he were to imagine what it must be like *to be* the frightened animal, he would at once be overcome by compassionate sentiments and immediately cease his experiments; unless, of course, he were of a diabolical heart and impervious to, and, moreover, took delight in, the sufferings of others.[135] Here one should note the close association between the pessimistic outlook and compassionate sentiments: in contrast to the optimistic perspective which regards every occurrence in a positive light and thus sees the good in all – even the diabolical – the acknowledgment of the sufferings of others necessarily invokes sentiments of empathy and a desire to alleviate the pain of the other in psychologically well-balanced, i.e. morally astute,

[135] This delight in the sufferings and misfortunes of others is known in German as *Schadenfreude* (Cartwright, 2005: 152).

human beings. Thus it is that pessimism may be said to be not merely the most reasonable, but also a really *virtuous*, way of thinking, for in contrast to optimism it does *not* make "a bitter mockery of the unspeakable sufferings of mankind" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 326) and, we may add, sentient life in general. Hence a more veracious and just characterisation of Schopenhauer would be to describe him as "the philosopher of pessimism *and* compassion",[136] for the former necessarily implies the latter, as I believe I have sufficiently illustrated in the course of my discussion.

In concluding this discussion I wish to confess that the argument, in which I have dichotomised between subjective and objective perspectives, is not in fact novel, but has its provenance in the third book of the second volume of *Die Welt*. Therein, Schopenhauer (1969b: 374) states in connection with aesthetic enjoyment that: "[e]verything is beautiful only so long as it does not concern us […] Life is *never* beautiful, but only the pictures of it, namely in the transfiguring mirror of art or poetry, particularly in youth, when we do not yet know it". To live, i.e. subjectively, necessarily entails a thwarting of the Will, which, as shall become conspicuous in due course, entails suffering. Thus it is that from the subjective perspective "life is never beautiful", for it excludes disinterested perception, i.e. will-lessness and hence pessimism reigns therein; whereas to assume volitional disinterestedness in an object precludes the possibility of suffering by eliminating the Will; it is primarily for this reason that pleasures (and frustrations) of the mind cannot be said to implicate the Will, for they are of an altogether different source. In my attempt to persuade incredulous readers of the veracity of pessimism I shall return to this matter. Let us now consider the way in which the metaphysical Will generates suffering within the phenomenal world.

5.3. The Will as the Ultimate Source of Discord and Suffering

Let us therefore turn to the third objection levelled against Magee's assertion, viz., that the manifestation of the metaphysical Will in the world of appearance explicates the

[136] The connection between pessimism and compassion is extremely significant, for Schopenhauer (quoted in Cartwright, 2005: 193) maintains that his philosophy is an amalgamation of metaphysics and ethics.

ubiquity of suffering. As Hitschmann (1956: 89) notes: "[e]ven more important [for Schopenhauer's pessimistic stance] than [the] metaphysical principle is the empirical impression of the contemplation of the world and of humanity […]". In other words, the empirical manifestation of the Will, i.e. within the world of appearance, presents a harrowing spectacle of suffering which, I shall subsequently argue, is utterly incompatible with optimism. It is in this response to Magee that the pith of Schopenhauer's pessimistic view is to be found; I therefore consider this section to be of the utmost significance.

Previously we identified three primary *inner* characteristics of the Will, viz., that the Will in-itself is unified, eternal and unchanging. Now, however, we must consider the *outer* characteristics of the Will. By *outer* I portend merely the characteristics the Will exhibits within the world of appearance – the world in which the principle of sufficient reason reigns. In order to determine the outer characteristics of the Will we must turn to a consideration of the phenomenal objects in which the Will manifests itself. But here we must also be mindful of the fact that among objects in the world of appearances the Will manifests itself in varying degrees: for instance, the Will manifests itself more perfectly in a human than in an inanimate object, such as a stone. Now given that the Will manifests itself most perfectly in that of sentient creatures it will be most illuminating and beneficial to our purpose of determining the outer characteristics of the Will to turn to a consideration of animal life (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 354), and in particular that of the human.

I imagine that most will have justifiably construed our characterisation of the inner characteristics of the Will as one of great repose; but the outer characteristics of that same entity produce a diametrically different picture. The reason for this is to be found in the fact of individuation – which Schopenhauer (1969a: 112) refers to as the *principium individuationis*.[137] The individuating of the Will, i.e. its manifestation in time and space into multifarious forms, produces a harrowing spectacle in so far as it places the Will at variance with itself:

[137] A Latin term which simply means "principle of individuation". According to Schopenhauer time and space are the individuating elements, for no two objects can exist at the same time and place simultaneously.

> "Thus everywhere in nature we see contest, struggle, and the fluctuation of victory […] Every grade of the Will's objectification fights for the matter, the space, and the time of another. Persistent matter must constantly change the form, since, under the guidance of causality, mechanical, physical, chemical, and organic phenomena, eagerly striving to appear, snatch the matter from one another, for each wishes to reveal its own Idea. This contest can be followed through the whole of nature; indeed only through it does nature exist: [for, as Empedocles says, 'if strife did not rule things, then all would be a unity']. Yet this strife itself is only the revelation of that variance with itself that is essential to the [Will]. This universal conflict is to be seen most clearly in the animal kingdom. Animals have the vegetable kingdom for their nourishment, and within the animal kingdom again every animal is the prey and food of some other. This means that the matter in which an animal's Idea manifests itself must stand aside for the manifestation of another Idea, since every animal can maintain its own existence only by the incessant elimination of another's. Thus the [*Wille-zum-Leben*] generally feasts on itself, and is in different forms its own nourishment, till finally the human race, because it subdues all the others, regards nature as manufactured for its own use." (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 146-147).

In the second volume of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969b: 354) offers a striking empirical corroboration of his theoretical formulation in the form of the following anecdote, which he expresses with unforgettable vividness:

> "Junghuhn[138] relates that in Java he saw an immense field entirely covered with skeletons, and took it to be a battlefield. However, they were nothing but skeletons of large turtles five feet long, three feet broad, and of equal height. These turtles come this way from the sea, in order to lay their eggs, and are then seized by wild dogs (*Canis rutilians*); with their united strength, these dogs lay them on their backs, tear open their lower armour, the small scales of the belly, and devour them alive. But then a tiger often pounces on the dogs. Now all this misery is repeated thousands and thousands of times, year in year out. For this, then, are these turtles born."

But the explication of this grim picture – this *bellum omnium contra omnes* – is to be found in the nature of the Will itself as objectified object; for as individuated volitional

[138] Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn (1809 – 1864), German botanist.

beings all are condemned to suffer the agony of existence, as each must necessarily find himself at variance with all others, "[…] everything a hunter and everything hunted […]" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 354). But one need not venture into the brutal state of nature in order to discover the essential *outer* characteristics of this Will; for, by way of introspection, all of us experience the nature of the Will on a daily basis in our craving for nourishment and our lust for sexual gratification. It is by way of these two seemingly mundane desires that one may arrive at an apprehension of Schopenhauer's concept of suffering, which may be succinctly expressed in the following proposition: all suffering arises "from lack, from deficiency" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 196), "from dissatisfaction with one's own state or condition" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 309). In short, suffering is experienced when one is cognizant[139] of the fact that what is, is not in accordance with what one desires. In other words, suffering, on Schopenhauer's account, is a product of an awareness of unfulfilled desire: one suffers when one is consciously aware of an unsatisfied wish, such as the pangs of hunger or the urge for sexual gratification.[140]

It will be beneficial to the discussion, however, to mention that the appearance of a *desire* is not necessarily sufficient to produce a state of suffering (Janaway, 2008: 329). Consequently, we must here distinguish between the notions of desire and striving. For although I have defined suffering as a state of unfulfilled volition I am compelled to acknowledge the fact that the mere existence of a desire does not in-itself presuppose the state of suffering. I may desire the acquisition of a particular object or state of being without experiencing discomfort or unpleasantness as a consequence thereof; however, once I actively undertake to acquire that which I desire the possibility of *thwarted* attainment of the end to which I strive is the appearance of suffering. For, strictly speaking, it is only *frustrated striving* (for which one must obviously be conscious as a

[139] It is significant to note that consciousness (knowledge, cognition) is acknowledged by Schopenhauer (1974b: 297) to be an essential component in the production of suffering.

[140] In my estimation Schopenhauer's doctrine is even able to account for suffering produced by way of anxiety: one fears the potential loss of some object (such as one's life or a loved one) and this *possibility of loss* – entertained in the mind as an actual loss – induces the sentiment of anxious suffering. The suffering of fear is slightly different, in so far as one is confronted with an actual dangerous object which threatens to immanently induce a loss, and consequently suffering ensues as a consequence thereof.

prerequisite) which produces a sentiment of pain and consequently suffering. For instance, an adolescent may contentedly fantasize about the possibility of having a passionate romantic relationship, but this amorous reverie is not experienced as unpleasant until the youth actually *strives with frustration* towards the intended goal. Thus it is that "[i]n early youth we sit before the impending course of our life like children at the theatre before the curtain is raised, who sit there in happy and excited expectation of the things that are to come" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 298), foolishly believing that the world lies before us as a stage with endless possibilities, wherein we imagine that we may accomplish every desire – no matter how difficult or outlandish it may in fact be. It is solely when we enter in upon this stage and assume the role of participants thereon that we experience the inevitable suffering of thwarted striving; it is then that the truth of the Schopenhauerian philosophy assumes its ascendency in consciousness. Thus, it ought to be borne in mind that throughout my discussion the term *desire* refers to an *active striving* towards the satiation of some or other volition.

But let us return to the matter of apprehending the truth of the Schopenhauerian philosophy by way of two universal experiences, viz., that of hunger and lust. *Prima facie*, it may appear as though these two aforementioned fundamental desires can be swiftly annulled by way of an instant gratification – for instance, one could eat an unpalatable item or masturbate – but the human mind complicates the matter by desiring the ideal: a man wants neither a dry, stale piece of bread to smother his pangs of hunger, nor does he want his hand or his old haggard wife to satisfy his sexual cravings. On the contrary, he may wish to take a slender young woman with voluptuous breasts out for a meal of freshly cooked prawns, caviar and champagne; hoping that after which they may retire to her boudoir whereupon the man in question may satisfy his potent sexual urges. In this way, the satiation of desire is complicated, for it cannot constantly – if ever – be satisfied by mundane or trite means; and the inevitable consequence is suffering.

But let us imagine, *per impossible*, that one's every desire could easily be satiated upon its emergence. Given the above observations we would be vindicated in assuming that such an individual would live the most carefree, contented existence. But Schopenhauer (1969a: 312) admonishes such thinking:

> "If […] it lacks objects of willing, because it is at once deprived of them again by too easy satisfaction, a fearful emptiness and boredom come over it; in other words, its being and its existence itself become an intolerable burden for it. Hence life swings like a pendulum to and fro between pain and boredom, and these two are in fact its ultimate constituents. This has been expressed very quaintly by saying that, after man had placed all pains and torments in hell, there was nothing left for heaven but boredom."

Given that the satiation of desires may lead to a condition of boredom it may appear as though boredom is a state of *avolition*. However, were this the case then the state of boredom would not be experienced as one of immense unpleasantness, but as one of extreme equanimity and contentment. Indeed, the state of boredom on this understanding, as Julian Young (2005: 212) notes, would be akin to that of the aesthetic state, i.e. a state in which the Will is temporarily suspended and one is momentarily released from its pressing demands. As a consequence, the condition of boredom cannot be construed as a state of avolition, but must be thought of as one of intense willing, in accordance with Schopenhauer's theory. In other words, *there must be an element of volition inherent to the state of boredom – it is not a state of will-lessness*.[141] However, boredom, unlike ordinary volitional states, is not a desire directed at a *particular* object; but is rather a *general* or *undirected* desire – it is, in short, a desire to possess volitions. As this may seem extremely confusing it will be helpful to follow Young (2005: 211) and distinguish between first-order and second-order volitions. The former are volitions "directed to objects other than the Will itself" (ibid.), whereas the latter refers to a desire for volitions, "a will to will" (ibid.). Boredom is thus a second-order volition in so far as it is, as I stated, a desire to possess volitions directed at particular objects. Thus, "[boredom] is suffering for exactly the same reason that willing is suffering, namely, it is a state in which there is a deep dissatisfaction of the Will" (Young, 2005: 212), i.e. an unsatisfied desire which strives in vain to acquire an object to which it can direct itself.

[141] This fact may be discerned most conspicuously in the expression: "I *wish* there were something for me to do!", which is often thought or uttered by many an individual afflicted by boredom.

Now due to the fact that boredom is a particular form of desire, viz., one undirected, it in fact produces a far more agonizing condition. The bored individual is one whose Will has no particular object to which it can strive, whereas an ordinary (first-order) volition has means by which it may be able to satiate its desire: for instance, the lustful man can direct his actions towards the acquisition of his desired object (an attractive female) by going to a bar or a brothel; but the bored individual has no such means to quieten his Will, for he wills without a particular object to which the Will is directed. Thus, although both first-order and second-order volitional states produce a condition of suffering the latter is the more acutely experienced and is consequently the more agonizing in so far as the bored individual cannot direct his tempestuous Will towards a goal by which he may annul it.

The pauper – who lives in a perpetual state of unfulfilled desire – looks upon the rich man with vitriolic envy, unaware that the latter is, in terms of suffering, none the better, but, by Schopenhauer's account, in a far worse condition. The reason for this has been explicated by the abovementioned observations, viz., if we consider the rich man to be in such a position as to be instantaneously capable of satisfying his every desire the moment such a one appears, we must imagine him to be in a perpetual state of extreme boredom. Now because the pauper is ignorant of the fact that boredom is a far more tormenting form of suffering, he thus foolishly wishes for his every need to be satiated in order for him to be in a state of fulfilment as he erroneously perceives the rich man to be in. But upon the abovementioned description of the nature of boredom, the poor, unsatisfied individual is in fact in a more favourable condition than the rich bored man: for so long as the former is not hindered from attaining his aims for too long, but is able to direct his desires towards the attainment thereof in a reasonable period, he is capable of keeping himself engaged, thereby curtailing the negative effects of both desire and boredom; whereas the latter suffers from an undirected Will, which, in extreme cases may even lead to suicide.

But, in spite of Schopenhauer's (1969b: 573 and 634) comments to the contrary,[142] it would be inaccurate to conclude from our aforementioned discussion that a

[142] "Everything in life proclaims that earthly happiness is destined to be frustrated, or recognized as an illusion" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 573). "There is only one inborn error, and that is the notion that we exist in order to be happy" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 634).

contentment is absolutely unattainable, for the logical assumption of our musings is that satiation of a desire does indeed induce a contentment of sorts, however fleeting it may be. Thus, even with Schopenhauer's pessimistic conception we can formulate a theory as to the attainment of happiness: if an individual were to balance his desires in such a way as to render them difficult of achievement so as to ward off boredom, but not too difficult as to render desire perpetually unsatisfied, we may justifiably assume that one can live a relatively contented life. But, it is necessary to note that according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 575; 1974b: 291) contentment cannot be positively experienced and hence it is often not apprehended as such until it has yielded to unpleasantness. Let us, therefore, now turn to a consideration thereof.

5.4. The Negativity of Happiness Thesis

According to Schopenhauer (1974b: 291-292), a primary reason for our inability to be conscious of contentment lies in the fact that satisfaction is negative, whereas suffering is the positive element. In my estimation these terms are misleading and Schopenhauer's meaning regarding these concepts can be best comprehended if we utilise the terms "absence" and "presence" *in lieu* of "negative" and "positive", respectively. Generally, people tend to associate the terms "positive" with goodness and "negative" with badness; and this may be justly described as a moral comprehension of the terms. Schopenhauer, however, does not intend this classification in a *moral* sense, but rather in, what I call, a *mathematical* sense. The latter expression may appear odd, but I have found it to be the most fruitful in rendering Schopenhauer's meaning perspicuous, for by the phrase I portend that the term "positive" should be thought of in connection with the addition symbol (+) in mathematics, while the term "negative" should be associated with the subtraction symbol (-). To say, then, that suffering is "positive" portends that something is *added to* or *present*, whereas to say that happiness is "negative" simply means that something is *subtracted from*, *removed* or *absent*. Thus, Schopenhauer (1974b: 291) paradoxically characterises suffering as positive in so far as it makes its existence felt: it is the *presence of a desire*; whereas, in contrast, he describes contentment as negative in so far as it is the *removal* or *absence* of some unsatisfied volition (i.e. suffering). Thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 575) states:

> "We feel pain, but not painlessness; care but not freedom from care; fear, but not safety and security. We feel the desire as we feel hunger and thirst; but as soon as it has been satisfied, it is like the mouthful of food which has been taken, and which ceases to exist for our feelings the moment it is swallowed. We painfully feel the loss of pleasures and enjoyments, as soon as they fail to appear; but when pains cease even after being present for a long time, their absence is not directly felt, but at most they are thought of intentionally by means of reflection. For only pain and want can be felt positively; and therefore they proclaim themselves; well-being, on the contrary is merely negative."

In other words, it is only loss – contemplated retrospectively – which teaches us about the true value of things; for owing to the nature of happiness as characterised by Schopenhauer (1974b: 291) one never becomes fully conscious of happiness, until it has been supplanted by the positively felt appearance of suffering. As such, "[…] we do not become conscious of the three greatest blessings of life […], namely health, youth and freedom, as long as we possess them, but only after we have lost them; for they too are negations. We notice that certain days of our life were happy only after they have made room for unhappy ones." (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 575). The terminally ill man laments the loss of his previous health, the incarcerated prisoner agonizes over the loss of the freedom he once took for granted, and the old woman pines for her youthful vigour and appearance – but the healthy, free and young remain ignorant of their fortune so long as they possess them.[143] I may add that it is only when we have lost someone we love that we realize how valuable they were to us; whereas we are often apt to take for granted the most valuable people in our lives while we still have them. This ultimately leads to the bleak conclusion that the apprehension of happiness is generally a *retrospective* (and, occasionally, a prospective) activity which occurs in periods of intense personal aguish:

> "[…] happiness lies always in the future, or else in the past, and the present may be compared to a small dark cloud driven by the wind over the sunny

[143] The famous adage "youth is wasted on the young", intimates that youthful people are unaware of the benefits of youth until old age sets in. I take the adage as a corroboration of Schopenhauer's "negativity of happiness" thesis.

> plain; in front of and behind the cloud everything is bright, only it itself always casts a shadow." (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 573).

Although this "negativity of happiness" thesis is, in my estimation, an accurate description of most states of contentment, Schopenhauer (cited in Young, 2005: 215) acknowledges that there are some exceptions. In particular, Schopenhauer (ibid.) exempts the pleasures of scent and those of the intellect. Indeed, the delight to be experienced by a pleasant odour does not presuppose an antecedent unpleasant one; and neither do intellectual pleasures presuppose the antecedent presence of unpleasant thoughts in order to be fully enjoyed. Thus, we must allow that there are some *positive* forms of happiness. As Julian Young (2005: 215) states:

> "It seems […] that whereas the negativity of happiness thesis suggests that we experience just three states – the pain of willing, the pain of boredom and a neutral state which as such cannot compensate for the others – Schopenhauer actually acknowledges four: the previous three plus a [fourth] state composed, relatively insignificantly, of those "satisfactions" (as we may call them) which do establish a little positive credit, but mainly of the pleasures which do not presuppose any preceding state of willing."

Now it ought to be evident that the negativity of happiness thesis offers the most compelling argument for Schopenhauer's notorious pessimism regarding existence; for the thesis declares that on the whole life vacillates like a pendulum between pain and boredom, interspersed with brief, fleeting, moments of a painless state we erroneously describe as "happiness". In this sense we may "compare life to a circular path of red-hot coals having a few cool places" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 380). Now although one might concur with Schopenhauer on the positive nature of suffering, viz., "[…] that [it] makes itself felt" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 291-292), those inclined towards a more optimistic view might venture to argue that the pleasant moments, even if exceptional, compensate for the inevitable suffering of life, thereby rendering existence worthwhile. Thus, in the second volume of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969b: 576) attempts to confront and address this criticism by observing that:

> "[…] it is quite superfluous to dispute whether there is more good or evil in the world; for the mere existence of evil decides the matter, since evil can never be wiped off, and consequently can never be balanced, by the good that exists along with or after it.

Mille piacer' non vagliono un tormento[144]

> For that thousands had lived in happiness and joy would never do away with the anguish and death-agony of one individual; and just as little does my present well-being undo my previous sufferings. Therefore, were the evil in the world even a hundred times less than it is, its mere existence would still be sufficient to establish a truth that may be expressed in various ways, although always only somewhat indirectly, namely that we have not to be pleased but rather sorry about the existence of the world; that its non-existence would be preferable to its existence; that it is something which at bottom ought not to be, and so on."

Thus, in response to an optimistic characterisation of existence which attempts to argue that our joys and pleasures compensate for or counterbalance our sufferings, Schopenhauer (1969b: 576) declares that a single pain is sufficient to slander the world and one's existence *in toto*. Such a view may truly be said to be the pinnacle of pessimism.

But although this aforementioned argument may appear compelling to the frustrated and dejected I cannot desist from mentioning a possible criticism thereof. If it is true that no amount of happiness or goodness can eradicate a single torment – *Mille piacer' non vagliono un tormento* – is it not equally as veracious to say that no amount of sorrow and evil can remove a single, fleeting moment of joy? For instance, the terrible torments of heartbreak can never abolish the happiness that once attended the interaction with the love-object. Thus, if one were psychologically robust they could, contrary to Schopenhauer's position, affirm the moment of happiness by accepting the sorrow which is inextricably bound to it. For, from an alternative perspective, we may be permitted to say: all the sorrow in the world cannot render one moment of happiness superfluous. We find this contrary position most fully and beautifully expressed by Nietzsche (2003: 332), Schopenhauer's self-professed antipode (Nietzsche, 1967b: 155), in his seminal work *Also Sprach Zarathustra*:

> "Did you ever say Yes to one joy? O my friends, then you said Yes to *all* woe as well. All things are chained and entwined together, all things are in love; if ever you wanted one moment twice, if ever you said: 'You please me,

[144] "A thousand pleasures do not compensate for one pain" – Petrarch (ibid.).

> happiness, instant, moment!' then you wanted *everything* to return! You wanted everything anew, everything eternal, everything chained, entwined together, everything in love, O that is how you *loved* the world, you everlasting men, loved it eternally and for all time: and you say even to woe: 'Go, but return!' *For all joy wants – eternity!*
>
> […] For all joy wants itself, therefore it also wants heart's agony! O happiness! O pain! O break, heart! You Higher Men, learn this, learn that joy wants eternity, joy wants the eternity of all things, wants *deep, deep, deep eternity!*"

I admit that in moments of intense psychical and physical pain it is extremely difficult to adopt this affirmative view and far easier to appeal to Schopenhauer's defeatist stance; however, we must acknowledge that it is not impossible for one to embrace this joyous view, which accepts the inextricability of happiness and suffering. The acceptance of the notion that opposites illuminate each other necessarily entails the realisation that happiness can only be comprehended by way of its contrary, viz., suffering – just as the apex of a mountain assumes its stature in proportion to the depth of its valley. From this perspective happiness necessarily assumes and entails suffering. In the last analysis then, it seems that Schopenhauer's argument is ultimately a matter of temperament for it does not take this contrary possibility into consideration.

However, in criticizing Schopenhauer's assertion by stating that one may equally avow one's life by way of an affirmation of a single instance of happiness in an otherwise tormented existence, I do not portend to give the erroneous impression that the "negativity of happiness" thesis is erroneous and that life is essentially conducive to human happiness. On the contrary, I maintain that from a subjective standpoint – which I previously mentioned and will momentarily elaborate upon – "life is never beautiful" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 374), but rather akin to a harrowing nightmare. Therefore, in an attempt to persuade my readers of the veracity of the pessimistic view, I will now turn to two external corroborations of the pessimistic standpoint.

5.5. External Corroborations of the Pessimistic View of Life

In spite of the cogent reasons presented in defence of the pessimistic view, I anticipate that many will find Schopenhauer's thesis unacceptable and hastily dismiss it as the

production of a profoundly troubled and tormented mind. Consequently, in an attempt to champion the pessimistic view of life, I wish to draw attention to two other *Weltanschauungen* which concur with Schopenhauer on the point of pessimism; in this way I hope to convince readers of the correctness of Schopenhauer's position.

5.5.1. Buddhism

The first external corroboration is to be found in the religious doctrines of Buddhism. It is generally well-known that the religion of the Buddha is essentially pessimistic about life; as, of course, can be evinced in the first Noble Truth (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 623); which I shall discuss in due course. Now, I anticipate that some might argue that the concurrence is in fact superficial in so far as it may be attributable to a direct influence, i.e. some might venture to argue that Schopenhauer's philosophy was directly influenced by the pessimistic Buddhist teaching.[145] However, it must be noted,

[145] I anticipate, and likewise reject, any intimation that Schopenhauer's pessimism emanated from Hindu scriptures, in particular, from the *Upanishads*. It is fairly well-known that Schopenhauer (1974b: 175-176) venerated these ancient Indian texts, which he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 397) praisingly refers to as "the consolation" of his life and death. Indeed, as Moira Nicholls (2008: 176) notes, Schopenhauer was introduced to "Hindu thought around 1813-1814", by way of his acquaintance with Friedrich Majer, an orientalist scholar (Cartwright, 2010: 266-269). This early acquaintance explicates the fact that we find many more references to Hinduism than to Buddhism in Schopenhauer's manuscripts and published writings (Nicholls, 2008: 176-177) – in particular, the first edition of *Die Welt* (1818/1819), wherein Schopenhauer first fully presents his pessimistic philosophy. It may therefore appear probable, and consequently argued in opposition to my view, that Schopenhauer's pessimism ultimately derived from Hindu sources (indeed, this would easily explicate the pessimism to be found in both the Schopenhauerian system and Buddhism). But although it is true that the notion of *Samsara* intimates that life is a punishment for past misdemeanours, one does not in fact get the impression of a pessimistic *Weltanschauung* from reading the *Upanishads*; on the contrary, to know that Brahman is identical with the entire universe – "[a]ll this universe is in truth Brahman" (*Chandogya Upanishad*, 1978: 114) – is in fact to acquire a certain bliss and equanimity in the face of life's adversities; thus is Brahman equated with joy: "[…] for from joy all beings have come, by joy they all live, and unto joy they all return" (*Taittiriya*

as Moira Nicholls (2008: 176) does in her article *The Influences of Eastern Thought on Schopenhauer's Doctrine of the Thing-in-Itself*, that Schopenhauer's early manuscripts contain very few references to Buddhism; Nicholls (2008: 176) states that she was only able to count two. Therefore, it seems improbable that Schopenhauer's doctrine was *directly* influenced by the Buddhist teaching; rather it appears, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 169) himself professes,[146] that he arrived at his pessimistic view of life independently thereof.

In corroboration of my claim, I may be permitted to note here that the first volume (1818/1819) of *Die Welt*, like the early manuscripts, contains few references to Buddhism, approximately eight (Nicholls, 2008: 177) in total, "five of which are added in later editions (1844 and 1859) of that volume" (ibid.); whereas in the second volume, first published in 1844, "there are at least thirty references to Buddhism" (Nicholls, 2008: 177). Indeed, it is only in the second volume of *Die Welt* (1844/1859) that the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism are explicitly mentioned by Schopenhauer (1969b: 623). Thus, it cannot be cogently argued that Schopenhauer's pessimism is derived

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Upanishad, 1978: 111). One cannot imagine Schopenhauer stating such of the Will. The essence of the universe in Hindu thought cannot be considered as something fundamentally evil, as is the case with the Will in the Schopenhauerian philosophy. Indeed, I note here that in so far as Schopenhauer identifies an identical essence in all that exists, an essential teaching of the *Upanishads* can be discerned in his doctrine; however, Schopenhauer's notion of the metaphysical Will and the pessimistic attitude attached thereto, is, by his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: xvi) own admission, "by no means to be found in the *Upanishads*." It therefore seems quite evident to me that Schopenhauer's pessimism could not have been acquired by way of the Hindu teaching and texts, in spite of the fact that Schopenhauer identifies the religion as essentially pessimistic in spirit (Cartwright, 2005: 125). As a corroboratory observation I note that some scholars have criticised Schopenhauer for "stigmatizing Hinduism by claiming that it [is] pessimistic" (Cartwright,2005: 78). I can only reiterate that I did not at all get the impression that Hinduism is conducive to pessimism when I read a selection of the *Upanishads* (translated by Juan Muscaró, 1978); I therefore encourage all Schopenhauerian scholars to engage directly with these classical Indian texts in order to arrive at an independent opinion regarding this matter.

[146] "And this agreement [i.e. between Schopenhauer's philosophy and Buddhism] must be yet the more pleasing to me, inasmuch as in my philosophizing I have certainly not been under its influence". (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 169)

from or that it was influenced by Buddhism. Therefore, we may consider the concurrence on this particular point between the two *Weltanschauungen* to be indicative of the ultimate truth of the pessimistic doctrine; indeed, this is the way in which Schopenhauer appears to have considered it:

> "If I wished to take the results of my philosophy as the standard of truth, I should have to concede to Buddhism pre-eminence over the others. In any case, it must be a pleasure to me to see my doctrine in such close agreement with a religion that the majority of men on Earth hold as their own, for this numbers far more followers than any other." (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 169).

Now, although the number of people who profess belief in a system or notion certainly does not attest to the truth thereof, it is extremely interesting to note that the Buddhist view concurs with the Schopenhauerian in declaring life to be full of suffering. In particular I observe that the first two of the four Buddhist Noble Truths accord perfectly with the Schopenhauerian teaching. As Moira Nicholls (2008: 188) notes the first two Noble Truths state:

(1) Life is permeated by suffering and dissatisfaction.
(2) The origin of suffering lies in craving or lust.

The first Noble Truth accords with Schopenhauer's view that all life is essentially filled with suffering, while the second corresponds to Schopenhauer's thesis that this suffering ultimately arises from the individuated Will, i.e., a state of unfulfilled volition. If Schopenhauer (1969b: 169) is indeed to be believed that his pessimistic view was not directly influenced by Buddhism, then it ought to strike us as an extremely curious coincidence that two systems, separated by so vast an expanse in both time and space, should accord so harmoniously in this particular regard. In my estimation, the concurrence between the two systems may be considered as tentative evidence of the veracity for the pessimistic view of life.

5.5.2. Evolution by Means of Natural Selection

Yet I anticipate that, in spite of the Buddhist concurrence, some irreligious individuals may remain incredulous as to the veracity of the pessimistic view – for it may be argued

that both the Buddha and Schopenhauer were "religiously" motivated in declaring life to be a state of perpetual suffering, in so far as both may have been unwittingly influenced by the desire to present soteriological doctrines[147] – hence I turn to a consideration of the second *Weltanschauung* which accords with Schopenhauer's pessimism, viz., that of the Darwinian view of evolution by means of natural selection.[148] Now although Schopenhauer rejects Darwin's *mechanism* by means of which the mutation of species is now universally thought to occur,[149] dismissing the theory as "shallow empiricism" (Cartwright, 2010: 466n1), he nonetheless accepts the notion that species can evolve (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 152).[150] This mutual evolutionary view of organisms is one such similarity between the two colossal thinkers; but in the subsequent discussion I shall attempt to illustrate that, although his theory is not usually associated with pessimism, Darwin's (2009b: 585-599) characterisation of life as a *struggle for existence* necessarily presupposes a pessimistic construal thereof.[151]

However, before I turn to a discussion of the way in which I take Darwin's theory to corroborate Schopenhauer's pessimistic stance, I wish first to illustrate the fact that

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[147] This assertion is made in connection with Hick's (1990: 3) observation that most religious systems possess doctrines of salvation or liberation.

[148] I note here that I am not the first to discern a similarity between the theories of Schopenhauer and Darwin. In 1870 David Asher, a friend and acolyte of Schopenhauer's, wrote an article entitled *Schopenhauer and Darwinism* which was subsequently published in the *Journal of Anthropology* of 1871 (cf. pages 312-332). Therein Asher attempts to illustrate some of the most striking similarities between the two theories. I shall shortly discuss Asher's notions in detail.

[149] This is primarily due to the fact that natural selection does not require the postulation of a striving, i.e. a Will. If Darwin had defined "natural selection" as nature's *desire* to produce such and such organisms, Schopenhauer would undoubtedly have commended and endorsed the theory; cf. the latter section on Schopenhauer and evolution for a more detailed discussion of this issue.

[150] Schopenhauer's evolutionism is known as *generatio in utero heterogeneo* (i.e. "generation in the womb of another").

[151] In particular one should consider chapter 3 of *The Origin of Species*, entitled *Struggle for Existence*.

others have, from the beginning, discerned numerous concurrences between the Schopenhauerian and Darwinian theories. As a place of departure, therefore, let us commence our discussion with a similarity made at a time when the implications of Darwin's theory were still unfolding, viz., in the year 1871. In his article *Schopenhauer and Darwinism* David Asher (1871: 329) argues that "[w]hat Schopenhauer called 'the *metaphysics* of sexual love', he might, had he been acquainted with Darwin's theory,[152] have designated [as 'evolution by means of natural selection']". Now in order to comprehend Asher's pronouncement one must first familiarize oneself with Schopenhauer's theory of eugenics, which I previously discussed in connection with male homosexuality. I shall reiterate significant aspects of the theory for the sake of the present discussion. In the second volume of *Die Welt* (cf. chapter XLIV), Schopenhauer (1969b: 533) explicitly states that:

> "[…] all amorousness is rooted in the sexual impulse alone, is in fact absolutely only a more closely determined, specialised, and indeed, in the strictest sense, individualised sexual impulse, however, ethereally it may deport itself."

To two young lovers their passion for each other may signify a transcendent unification of their souls; however, Schopenhauer (1969b: 534) maintains that such erotic desire is merely an act of the Will attempting to compose the next generation; in short it is a *meditatio compositionis generationis futurae, e qua iterum pendent innumerae generationes*.[153] Here, of course, we discern, once again, that the Will cannot be "blind" as Schopenhauer (1969a: 115) so emphatically insists. But, in spite of this complication,

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[152] It must be borne in mind that the first edition of the *Origin of Species* was published a year prior to Schopenhauer's death in 1860. Therefore, the so-called "sage of Frankfurt" did not get an opportunity to read and study Darwin's theory as presented by the great naturalist in his revolutionary work. However, as Cartwright (2010: 466n1) notes, "[a] few months before his death, [Schopenhauer] read a detailed account of [Darwin's *opus maximum*]". Nonetheless, we cannot assume that this "detailed account" contained perfectly accurate information regarding Darwin's theory, for a secondary work necessarily, even if unwittingly, presents another individual's interpretation thereof. Indeed, Schopenhauer (1974a: 31) argues that the reading of a secondary text, as opposed to a primary one, is akin to the desire "to have our food masticated by someone else".

[153] "Meditation on the composition of the future generation on which in their turn innumerable generations depend" [Payne's translation, cf. Schopenhauer, 1969b: 534].

the most significant point for our present purpose is the fact that the Will is said to be *selecting* favourable physiological characteristics for the coming generation. Here, of course, Schopenhauer (1969b: 539, 545) has in mind the prototypical Platonic Idea as the model for perfection, to which all love intrigues, and thus the production of progeny, tend.[154] The appearance of the Platonic Ideas within Schopenhauer's theory is a point of difficulty in Asher's argument, but for the moment I shall postpone a discussion thereon and focus solely on the similarity between both systems. Accordingly, Schopenhauer (1969b: 545) argues that due to the imperfection of every extant creature, each seeks and selects a mate who can potentially cancel one's own deficiencies, thus "everyone loves what he himself lacks" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 545); "in fact, he will even find beautiful those imperfections that are the opposite of his own. Hence, for example, short men look for tall women, persons with fair hair like those with dark, and so on" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 539). It is not my intention to determine the veracity of this view, for my part I wish only to observe that Schopenhauer's eugenics aims, as I mentioned, at the production of *prototypically* perfect human types (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 549). Now, although Schopenhauer does not declare this perfect anthropoid type to be conducive to survival, it is possible to discern, as Asher (1871: 329) has done, the Darwinian concept of natural selection at work in this process of sexual attraction. In other words, the Will consciously *selects* certain characteristics in order to produce prototypically perfect human types, just as nature unwittingly *selects* attributes conducive to survival.

Darwin evidently read Asher's article, from which he acquired Schopenhauer's passages on sexual selection which he (Darwin, 1909: 893) approvingly quotes in the third and definitive edition (1877)[155] of his work *The Descent of Man*. This is interesting in so far as we must acknowledge two points of variance between the two colossal

[154] "[E]veryone will decidedly prefer and ardently desire the most beautiful individuals; in other words, those in whom the character of the species is most purely and strongly marked" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 539).

[155] Unfortunately I have not been able to examine a copy of the edition of 1875; which I believe to be a reprint of the second edition of 1874. It may be, however, that I stand to be corrected in so far as Darwin may have already included his reference to Schopenhauer therein.

thinkers; I have already mentioned both, but I shall now elaborate upon them for the sake of thoroughness.

Firstly, Schopenhauer (1969b: 539, 545) is committed to the notion of Platonic Ideas, which the Darwinian theory is not. Indeed, one can even discern the influence of the Platonic Ideas in Schopenhauer's (1974b: 152) particular form of evolutionism, i.e. *generatio in utero heterogeneo*; for according thereto creatures cannot mutate gradually and imperceptibly, but appear fully-formed, i.e. according to a fixed "type", once hatched from an egg or born from a uterus (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 153). Thus, although the Platonic Ideas are not incompatible with evolutionism as such, they are utterly at variance with the Darwinian form thereof. To fully comprehend this fact one must bear in mind that *intermediary species* are noticeably absent in Schopenhauer's evolutionism: *generatio in utero heterogeneo* is committed to the view that one particular species is able to produce another distinct type, hence Schopenhauer (1974b: 153) argues that:

> "[…] there once emerged from the egg of a fish an ophidian, at another time from the egg of this a saurian; but at the same time there came from the egg of another fish a batrachian; however, from this there came a chelonian; from the egg of a third was born a cetacean and eventually a dolphin."

Thus, one may notice that according to Schopenhauer's evolutionism one creature does not gradually and imperceptibly mutate into another, as is the case in the Darwinian theory (Darwin, 2009b: 689);[156] rather a particular species appears fully-formed from another, distinct, species. We must note that according to the theory of *generatio in utero heterogeneo* nature makes great leaps from one creature to another.[157] Now, I conjecture that one of the reasons – perhaps the primary reason – that this particular

[156] "On the theory of natural selection, we can clearly understand why [Nature] should not [have taken a leap from structure to structure]; for natural selection can act only by taking advantage of slight successive variations; she can never take a leap, but must advance by the shortest and slowest steps". (Darwin, 2009b: 689)

[157] Curiously, Schopenhauer (1969b: 296) intimates that, save for the transition from the inorganic to the organic, *natura non facit saltus* [i.e. "nature makes no leaps"]. However, we must acknowledge that his acceptance of the theory of *generatio in utero heterogeneo* violates this principle.

evolutionism, i.e. *generatio in utero heterogeneo*, appeals to Schopenhauer's sensibilities is due to the fact that it is perfectly compatible with the theory of Platonic Ideas. According to the Platonic theory every species has a corresponding prototypical and universal type, to which all actual creatures stand as mere imperfect ectypes; thus, if one species can arise from another then, it follows, that every new species must arrive fully-formed, corresponding to its particular universal type, i.e. its particular Platonic Idea. It must be borne in mind that the Platonic Ideas do "[n]ot themselves [enter] into time and space, the medium of the individuals, they remain fixed, subject to no change, always being, never having become" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 129). Therefore, these universal types, or species, are eternal and pre-determined; thus, an evolutionary theory based thereon must, of necessity, maintain that the appearance of one species from another *cannot* occur gradually and imperceptibly.

But let us, for the sake of argument, imagine that one attempted to avow both a Darwinian form of evolutionism *and* the Platonic theory of Ideas, what would this amount to? If we recall that the Darwinian theory insists that the mutation of species occurs by way of imperceptible and slight variations (Darwin, 2009b: 689), then it would seem that the corresponding Platonic Ideas would appear identical for the most part. In other words, the slight mutations in similar organisms would not be discernible in a universal, i.e. general, form and one would be left with many identical Platonic Ideas corresponding to the numerous varieties. As a consequence thereof, one would violate the law of parsimony, i.e. Ockham's principle, in so far as one would postulate the existence of many seemingly redundant entities. The Platonic Idea, being a general prototype, cannot account for slight variations, just as the universal concept of "dog" does not contain within itself a mechanism whereby one may be able to distinguish between the numerous breeds of dogs. Thus, the Platonic Ideas would necessarily present an extremely non-Darwinian view of evolution, in so far as solely definite, i.e. entirely distinguished types, would be capable of possessing corresponding Platonic Ideas. Expressed in more tangible terms, if one wished to avow the Platonic view one would have to postulate solely one hominoid/anthropoid Idea to account for the multifarious types thereof; thus, *Australopithecus africanus, Australopithecus afarensis, Australopithecus garhi, Homo habilis, Homo erectus, Homo heidelbergensis* and the manifold other intermediary hominoid types, many of which are unknown to us due to the imperfection of the fossil record, would correspond to solely one Platonic

Idea! The numerous variations in the hominoid type would have to be construed as inconsequential "flawed deviations of the ideal [type]" (Dawkins, 2010: 22), for although deviations may occur in the world of time and space, the Platonic Ideas are, as mentioned, eternally insusceptible to alteration (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 129). As a consequence of these considerations, it is evident that the Platonic Ideas are utterly incompatible with a Darwinian form of evolution. I cannot state with certainty that Schopenhauer was aware of this difficulty; however, I tentatively conjecture that this antagonism between the two doctrines would most probably have counted as another cogent reason for his rejection of the Darwinian theory.

In discussing this interesting matter I do not wish to give the erroneous impression that Schopenhauer's avowal of the Platonic Ideas was foolish, for it must be borne in mind that, although the Platonic theory strikes us as bizarre today, in a pre-evolutionary era the existence of multifarious creatures was a perplexing riddle; it was therefore understandable that intelligent individuals should attempt to explicate the existence of such by way of the readily-available Platonic view. Of course, Schopenhauer's *magnum opus*, wherein he first postulates the existence of Platonic Ideas (cf. section 25 of volume one of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*; pages 127-130 of Payne's translation), was composed prior to his acquaintance with the theory of *generatio in utero heterogeneo*, which, as he himself (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 153-154) acknowledges, he first acquired in or after 1847 (which occurred after the publication of the second volume of *Die Welt* in 1844) by way of "the anonymous author [i.e. Robert Chambers] of [the 6th edition of] *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*". Now if one earnestly takes into consideration the fact that Schopenhauer's definitive principal work was composed and published (1844) prior to his acquaintance with evolutionary views (1847), then it is certainly not an exaggeration to say that Schopenhauer's philosophy is a *pre-evolutionary* one. However, in spite of his notorious stubbornness (cf. R. J. Hollingdale's introduction to his translation of excerpts from *Parerga und Paralipomena*, wherein Hollingdale characterises Schopenhauer as possessing "an immovable mind", pages 23-26), Schopenhauer was surprisingly accepting of evolutionary views, which he subsequently (supposedly in or after 1847) attempts to incorporate into his system. As we have seen, evolution by way of *generatio in utero heterogeneo* is perfectly compatible with the doctrine of Platonic Ideas, hence Schopenhauer could easily incorporate such a theory into his system

without vitiating the latter. We can only conjecture that if Schopenhauer had lived long enough, he might have altogether abandoned the Platonic view in favour of Darwinian evolutionism. Schopenhauer, however, died in 1860 and he was therefore unable to study and experience first-hand the remarkable explanatory power of Darwin's mechanism of natural selection, as I mentioned previously. Furthermore, we must acknowledge that, even though evolution by means of *generatio in utero heterogeneo* appears nowadays to be bizarrely erroneous, Schopenhauer had a remarkably *prospective* mind in so far as he accepts the notion that creatures can indeed transform; for it is reasonable to assume (given the vehemently negative reaction to Darwin's theory in the nineteenth century) that most of Schopenhauer's contemporaries were committed to an immutable view of organic nature.

Secondly, and no less significant, is the fact, which I have attempted to illustrate on numerous occasions throughout my disquisition, viz., that the Will cannot be considered "blind", in spite of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 115, 1969b: 357, 497, 570, 579, 642, et al.) repeated assertions to the contrary. I already attempted to reveal this fact by way of my discussion on male homosexuality; now, however, I shall succinctly corroborate it by way of Schopenhauer's theory of sexual selection. I observe that if the manifested Will coerces an individual to select qualities in a partner which shall cancel both lovers' imperfections (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 539) then it follows that the Will must consciously and knowingly act to affect that end. However, I anticipate a potential criticism of my interpretation, for it may be cogently argued that one is fully conscious of one's object-choice in selecting a mate; indeed, we are all aware of what physical attributes we value in a potential partner; hence my assertion that such selection emanates from the Will may appear erroneous. But, in response, I note that although we may be fully conscious of *what* we are attracted to, it is not always evident *why* we should be attracted to those particular characteristics. For instance, a woman may be fully conscious of the fact that she is attracted to men with large noses, but upon asking her why she likes such she may be unable to offer any cogent explanation. The reason, according to Schopenhauer's theory, viz., that she has a button-nose and so favours men with the opposite attribute in order to produce "normal-size-nosed" children, may not occur to her at all. Thus, it becomes evident that my criticism is valid, because although the phenomenal mind of the woman in question is oblivious to this fact, the Will must be aware of it and, consequently, it cannot be said to be "blind".

However, we must acknowledge that Schopenhauer's theory is at variance with the Darwinian on this point; for the latter maintains that natural selection acts totally unconsciously: genetic mutations are a random and haphazard event which occur without any awareness and knowledge; indeed, I observe in this connection that most genetic mutations are inimical to a creature's well-being. Thus, were these genetic anomalies a product of conscious deliberation – which according to Darwin's theory we would not be able to attribute to the metaphysical realm – the pernicious ones would undoubtedly be prevented from occurring, for what conscious creative force would willingly select that a creature be born with a serious disability? On the contrary, the presence of congenital defects seems to indicate that nature operates unconsciously and *amorally*; hence, it would appear that the Will – given that it must be conscious – cannot be the mysterious force which underlies all natural phenomena.

But here we discern a further significant *dissimilarity* between the two theories which I cannot withhold myself from mentioning; for whereas Schopenhauer's theory of sexual selection ultimately aims at the prototypically perfect anthropoid type, Darwin's theory of evolution by means of natural selection merely intimates that adaptive and beneficial qualities for existence shall be preserved and thus passed on to succeeding generations. According to the Darwinian view, evolutionism does not necessarily tend towards perfection; to be "more evolved" does not necessarily portend a more elevated position on Darwin's (2009b: 628-638) "Great Tree of Life". For instance, a positive attribute such as sight, may be lost if conditions require it; thus, although natural selection has favoured the loss of sight in the subterranean sand-dwelling mole, I highly doubt that anyone would consider the loss thereof to be an ascent in the evolutionary scale. Schopenhauer's theory, however, is committed to the view that nature strives for progress and perfection. We have seen that in the human selection of a mate the Will, which is synonymous with nature, may be said to strive for the production of a prototypically perfect anthropoid type; but Schopenhauer (1974b: 143) even goes so far as to declare the human type to be "the last stage" of the manifestation of the Will, for according to him the denial of the Will appears therein and thus:

> "[…] although there are no physical grounds for guaranteeing that another world- catastrophe will not occur,[158] there is nevertheless against it a moral one, namely that such a catastrophe would now be to no purpose, since the inner essence of the world needs no higher objectification for the possibility of its salvation from the world."

Thus may the anthropoid type be said to be the most perfect and ultimate end of nature or the Will in Schopenhauer's philosophy. Hence it is a merit to the Darwinian theory of evolution that, unlike Schopenhauer's theory of sexual selection and his theory of the manifestation of the Will in the phenomenal world, it does not intimate the interchangeability of the terms "evolution" and "progress", i.e. Darwin's evolutionism, unlike Schopenhauer's, is not orthogenetic.

However, let us return to the matter of concurrence between the two theories. As we have seen, Asher (1871: 329) attempted to indicate the convergence between Schopenhauer's theory of sexual attraction and the Darwinian view of natural selection; however, one can discern less controversial and troublesome similarities between both systems. For instance, the Darwinian theory intimates that the brain, like all other bodily organs, is a product of the evolutionary process; thus the acquisition of a greater intellect must serve the purpose of self-preservation in the struggle for existence. I note here that this accords immaculately with Schopenhauer's (1969b: 280) characterisation of the human brain; for Schopenhauer is arguably, as Magee (1997: 287) notes:

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[158] Schopenhauer (1974b: 143 & 152) maintains that the Earth has witnessed either three or four catastrophes in which the lower grades of the Will's objectification were purged, thus permitting the appearance of the Will's higher objectifications, the last of which is humankind. I must acknowledge here, that Schopenhauer's (1974b: 152) explanation for the way in which a mutation occurs whereby one species produces another is extremely mystical; for he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 152) states that "[a]fter the vital force [i.e. the Will] of this couple's species had been checked in some way and had been augmented and enhanced in that couple to an abnormal degree, there now no longer emerged the likeness of the couple, but, by way of exception, a form directly akin to it, yet at a higher stage; and this occurred at a favourable hour, at the right position of the planets, and with a fortunate combination of all the atmospheric, tellurian, and astral influences. Thus the pair had on this occasion produced not a mere individual, but a species."

> "[…] the first great philosopher to see the mind in biological terms, to see it first and foremost as a physical organ at work, a survival mechanism whose operations are to be understood only in terms of the functions for which it has been evolved; and to see in this light that man is not a rational animal, since mind is not a spectator but an instrument, constructed not for the detached observation of the world or the impersonal acquisition of knowledge but to light the field for action, and is therefore not sovereign but subordinate to the purposes of the Will."

Upon a Darwinian interpretation, the veracity of this view can easily be confirmed by way of a consideration of man's innate physical weakness in comparison to that of animals of a comparable size. If man did not evolve a greater capacity for ratiocination he would undoubtedly have become extinct; for, I reiterate, the human-animal is, in comparison to animals of a similar stature, a physical weakling (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 280); hence, in the struggle for existence he and his progeny, without a greater capacity for intelligence, would certainly have become easy prey for other, more physically powerful, animals. Here I may be permitted to observe that the notion that this mental apparatus is not a transcendent or metaphysical entity, but rather a product of the physical world, intimates that, by its very nature, the mind is limited to a comprehension of the liveable (in our case, human) world in which we find ourselves; consequently, we ought not find it surprising that the deepest depths of this universe elude the grasp of human apprehension – for although humankind has acquired a vast quantity of *genuine* knowledge *solely* by way of the scientific method, there are still many mysteries which remain unknown; and, I conjecture, will perpetually remain so, owing to the finitude of the human brain: *ignoramus et ignorabimus*.[159] But, to return to the principal matter, the most significant notion to be derived from this view is that the mind is, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 279), an instrument in the struggle for survival (Young, 2005: 5), for *natura nihil agit frustra et nihil facit supervacaneum;*[160] therefore, the:

> "[…] extending and perfecting the brain, and thus increasing the powers of knowledge, is taken by nature, like all the rest, namely in consequence of the

[159] "We do not know, and we shall not know".

[160] "Nature does nothing in vain, and creates nothing superfluous" (quoted by Schopenhauer, 1969b: 279).

> increased *needs*, and hence in the service of the *Will*. What this Will aims at and attains in man is indeed essentially the same as, and not more than, what its goal is in the animal, nourishment […], propagation [and, we may add, protection from the brutality of nature].” (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 279-280).

For this last qualification is the point at which I find the greatest concurrence between Schopenhauer and Darwin,[161] viz., in their characterisation of life as a *bellum omnium contra omnes*.[162] Here, unlike in Asher’s (1871: 329-330) aforementioned concurrence, there are no problematical elements.[163] In this particular sense, I conjecture that Schopenhauer is sometimes referred to as a precursor to Darwin (McGill, 1971: 21, 286; Young, 2005: 86). For it will be recalled that according to Schopenhauer’s thesis, the objectified Will causes perpetual conflict between creatures, because in order to sustain itself as an appearance a creature must necessarily destroy the life of another (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 147); in this way one creature becomes the prey and nourishment of another, “[t]hus everywhere in nature we see contest, struggle, and the fluctuation of victory […]. Every grade of the Will’s objectification fights for the matter, the space, and the time of another” (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 146-147). I maintain that this harrowing metaphysical, or philosophical, description of nature finds scientific, i.e. materialistic, corroboration in the Darwinian concept of the “struggle for existence”, and it may thus, in my estimation, be considered the metaphysical counterpart thereto.[164]

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[161] In a memorable passage Darwin (2009b: 590) states: “In looking at Nature, it is most necessary to keep the foregoing considerations always in mind – never to forget that every single organic being around us may be said to be striving to the utmost to increase in numbers; that each lives by a struggle at some period of its life; that heavy destruction inevitably falls either on the young or old, during each generation or at recurrent intervals […] The face of Nature may be compared to a yielding surface, with ten thousand sharp wedges packed close together and driven inwards by incessant blows, sometimes one edge being struck, and then another with greater force”.

[162] “A war of all against all”.

[163] Such as the Platonic Ideas and the consciousness of the Will.

[164] In stating this I do not want to be misconstrued as portending that I hold Schopenhauer’s metaphysical notion of the Will to be complementary to the various other forms of scientific enquiry. Although I maintain that there is undoubtedly value in Schopenhauer’s (1889b: 219)

Of course, in stating this I do not wish to give the erroneous impression of an absolute concurrence between both theories; on the contrary, I readily acknowledge that Schopenhauer rejects, among other things,[165] the mechanism of natural selection due to the fact that it does not entail the notion of the metaphysical Will (Cartwright, 2010: 466n1); however, in so far as creatures are said to struggle for existence with one another (Darwin, 2009b: 590) one may, I maintain, discern the Schopenhauerian notion of a *Wille-zum-Leben* inherent in every organism. Indeed, I further maintain that the Darwinian theory can be used to corroborate Schopenhauer's notion, in so far as natural selection can explicate how the Will can be said to be "blind" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 115), i.e. unconscious. As we have seen, Schopenhauer's teleological extension of the Will in nature precludes the possibility of the Will being described as "blind"; for if the Will is to produce adaptive physical parts conducive to survival, such as teeth, claws, horns, intellect, etc., then it must know prior to the appearance thereof which structures shall be of most benefit to the survival of a particular organism. Therefore, in spite of the significance accorded by Schopenhauer to the so-called "blindness" of the metaphysical Will, his theory is actually committed to the contrary view. Now it seems to me that the Darwinian theory is able to offer Schopenhauer a cogent solution to this difficulty, for it does not assume the existence of such a teleological force in nature; instead nature is said to *unconsciously* "select" profitable adaptations, thereby

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assertion that science is founded upon the inexplicable, I do not consider his metaphysics as capable of adequately explicating those mysteries. Indeed, I have elsewhere (cf. section 4.8.4.) argued that Schopenhauer's philosophy is incompatible with the scientific method. In my present discussion I have solely tried to illustrate that Schopenhauer's metaphysical notion of the "*Wille-zum-Leben*" is neither at variance with nor antagonistic towards Darwin's empirical theory of evolution by means of natural selection; and hence – given that I have attempted to show that Schopenhauer's pessimism is inextricably bound to his metaphysics – the latter may be taken as offering an "external" corroboration of the former's pessimistic characterisation of life. However, in stating this, I wish to make emphatically clear that I do not hold a metaphysical Will to be the driving force of the evolutionary process or the mechanism of natural selection.

[165] I have already discussed some of the dissimilarities between the systems; however I may be permitted here to mention that, unlike Darwin, Schopenhauer (1974b: 103) maintains that the production of new species is extremely difficult for nature, that the human is the ultimate *telos* of nature (1974b: 143-144) and that a distinct species can independently appear in two specific locations (1974b: 155-156).

preserving them and dispensing with the less beneficial adaptations (Darwin, 2009b: 586); in this way creatures are compelled to imperceptibly mutate. In this sense we must acknowledge that the mechanism of natural selection accords immaculately with Schopenhauer's (1969a: 115 and 1969b: 357, 497, 570, 579, 642) characterisation of the Will as "blind", i.e. as acting without any knowledge.

Now, in an attempt to illustrate the compatibility between the Schopenhauerian philosophy and the Darwinian scientific theory – in spite of Schopenhauer's explicit rejection of the latter (Cartwright, 2010: 466n1) – it seems to me that it can be cogently argued that the driving force, i.e. the Will, haphazardly manifests itself into a plethora of different organisms; thereafter the mechanism of natural selection assumes its function and unconsciously preserves the organisms best suited to existence; while the less beneficially manifested products of the Will perish and become extinct.[166] Accordingly, those better adapted to survive the harsh conditions of existence will have a greater chance of preserving their genetic material and thus producing progeny. This aforementioned point illustrates that, to my mind at least, Schopenhauer's famous metaphysical notion is certainly not incompatible with Darwin's process by means of which evolution is said to occur, viz., natural selection; indeed, it seems to me that *the two views mutually complement each other*, as I shall shortly attempt to argue in another respect by way of a significant dichotomisation. I conjecture that had Schopenhauer realised this significant point, he would have come to acknowledge the benefits the Darwinian theory have for his own philosophy; for as I illustrated, the Darwinian mechanism of natural selection offers a cogent explication for the way in which the "blind" metaphysical Will can be said to drive the evolutionary process, whereas

[166] It appears that Schopenhauer (1974b: 155-156) was reluctant to accept this prodigal view of the Will. However, it seems to me that it is the only view compatible with the assertion of the Will being a "blind" entity (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 115). The Will's supposed frugality is necessarily dependent upon its awareness and knowledge of what it produces, for if it is to carefully preserve the general type, i.e. the species, then it must ensure the correct spatial and temporal placement of each of its productions; thus Schopenhauer (1974b: 156) states: "[nature knows] what she wants, wills it decidedly, and accordingly sets to work […]." In contrast to this view, the Darwinian theory necessarily assumes the unconsciousness of nature, for the protracted production of a particular species followed by its swift extinction is of no concern to her – *natura non contristatur* [nature is not saddened] – owing to its obliviousness.

Schopenhauer's evolutionary theory of *generatio in utero heterogeneo* necessarily entails the existence of a conscious and knowledgeable Will which produces prefabricated organisms perfectly adapted to the environments in which they find themselves. Unfortunately, however, Schopenhauer did not discern this fact, instead he chose to fixate on the Darwinian theory's non-metaphysical, i.e. materialistic (Cartwright, 2010: 466n1), nature which necessarily led to his rejection thereof.

But not only does the Darwinian theory offer a non-conscious mechanism for the way in which an unconscious Will can be said to produce numerous well-adapted organisms, it also seems to me that, conversely, the Schopenhauerian notion of a "will-to-live" may be tacitly assumed to exist within every organism according to Darwin's theory. Thus, just as the Darwinian theory seems to corroborate the Schopenhauerian notion of a "blind" Will producing multifarious organisms, so too does the Schopenhauerian theory substantiate the Darwinian by supplying it with a description for the mysterious innate force which propels creatures to continue with existence, in spite of the harshness and unpleasantness thereof. Of course, in stating this I do not portend that Darwin tacitly implies the notion of a metaphysical Will, for as we now know, given Schopenhauer's criticism and rejection thereof, Darwin does not refer to the notion of a *Wille-zum-Leben* as the *primum mobile* of the process of natural selection*;* however, when Darwin speaks of the "struggle for existence" it seems acceptable to me to construe the inward impetus whereby an organism seeks to maintain its existence and propagate its species as an innate "will-to-live". For Darwin can only state that all creatures are furnished with a drive to survive and propagate their species, he cannot explicate *why* this is so or what this force actually is. Furthermore, if we earnestly take into consideration Schopenhauer's (1974b: 3) assertion, that "[t]he ultimate basis on which all our knowledge and science rest is the inexplicable [and] [t]his inexplicable something devolves on metaphysics" then we shall conclude that the Darwinian theory, given that it is entirely empirical and thus limited to the phenomenal world, is necessarily incomplete and hence in need of a metaphysics as its foundation. The Schopenhauerian metaphysical theory is in fact the most appropriate selection given its biological inclination. In this sense the "Philosophy of the Will" may be taken as a complementary addendum to the Darwinian view of evolution by means of natural selection. In no way does the postulation of such an impetus, i.e. a *Wille-zum-Leben*, vitiate Darwin's profound theory; on the contrary, it seems to me to offer a cogent explanation for the

preservation of life amidst the most harrowing events and environments. This is one way in which the two theories can be regarded as mutually complementary; but I shall subsequently consider a dichotomisation I consider extremely significant in illustrating the mutual endorsement of both theories.

The concurrence between the Schopenhauerian and Darwinian worldviews on the notion of life as a perpetual struggle between creatures for bare existence is striking. However, it is curious that although Darwin (2009b: 590, 592, etc.) also apprehends and discusses the harrowing spectacle of the struggle for survival his theory is hardly, if ever, characterised as *pessimistic*. What is to account for this oddity? I conjecture that the reason for this is due to the fact that as a scientist Darwin did not take into consideration the *subjective* agony experienced by the creatures he objectively observed. Darwin never explores what it means on a personal level to be a creature caught in the frightening struggle to exist; he is at all times content merely to explore, coldly and objectively, the way in which such suffering causes one creature to gradually mutate into another. Schopenhauer, in striking contrast, delves into the subjective sphere and is perpetually concerned with exploring and offering a solution to the suffering of a volitional creature. Now in the subsequent section I shall attempt to argue at length that from the inner, i.e. *subjective*, standpoint one may certainly apprehend the world in a Schopenhauerian-Buddhist sense, viz., in thoroughly pessimistic terms. I take the Darwinian theory of evolution by means of natural selection to be the *objective* correlative of the subjective Schopenhauerian view. In this way I maintain that the former offers a confirmation of the latter's pessimistic view.

As a correlate to the fact that the Darwinian theory is not, if ever, characterised as pessimistic, it is interesting to note that although Schopenhauer (1969a: 146-147) was aware of the struggle for existence between creatures and maintained a non-Darwinian view of evolution (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 153), his colossal intellect did not entertain the possibility of a connection between the two, viz., the possibility of the struggle for existence driving the process of organic mutation. I conjecture that one of the primary reasons for this may be discovered in the different *modi operandi* employed by Schopenhauer and Darwin. It seems to me that the primary difference in the way in which both these geniuses considered the world hinges upon what I shall call the objective/subjective dichotomisation.

Yet I wish to explicitly acknowledge that the dichotomisation I have drawn between the subjective and the objective is not a novel concoction; Schopenhauer (1974b: 107) expressly mentions the distinction when he writes:

> "All the *natural sciences* labour under the inevitable disadvantage of comprehending nature exclusively from the *objective* side and of being indifferent to the *subjective*."

He (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 107) goes on to state that subjective contemplation "devolves on philosophy". Therefore, it is appropriate that Darwin – the natural scientist – should pursue the *objective* path, while Schopenhauer – the metaphysical philosopher – should tread upon the *subjective*. Yet I wish to illustrate in the subsequent sections that the two perspectives are not incompatible and mutually antagonist towards each other; on the contrary, I seek to reveal their mutual compatibility and the way in which each complements the other, just as two well-suited lovers may be said to do the same.

In short, I maintain that our moral evaluation of life primarily depends on our perspective thereto, i.e. if we consider life in a detached way as impartial spectators we are apt to view it in much the same way as we consider a work of art according to Schopenhauer's aesthetic thesis, for "knowledge is always painless" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 297); whereas if we consider life from *within*, i.e. as willing characters embroiled in the struggle to survive, we are apt to regard it in an extremely different light, i.e. as something essentially painful and disagreeable, for "pain concerns the *Will* alone and consists in checking, hindering, or thwarting this […]" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 297). This notion may be most easily comprehended by way of the aesthetic theory of disinterested contemplation of the most harrowing works of art – such as Goya's *Saturn Devouring his Son* – wherein one either assumes an objective or a subjective stance. If, on the one hand, we consider Goya's painting *objectively*, i.e. as mere spectators impervious to the sentiments of Saturn's son, we may derive some aesthetic pleasure from the image, in spite of its gruesome theme; on the other hand, should we assume the *subjective* stance, empathise with Saturn's son and imagine to ourselves how harrowing his final moments must have been we are thus rendered incapable of that aesthetic pleasure. The principal point here is that to experience life "from within", i.e. as a living, sentient creature, necessarily entails a great amount of

discomfort and suffering; hence it is that the exposure to such unfortunate events will inevitably lead, in my estimation, to a pessimistic view of existence; for, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 374) observes, from the subjective perspective "life is never beautiful".

Now it is obvious that in general the objective stance is considered superior to that of the subjective, for it promises to offer "cold, hard facts", which supposedly approximate more closely to the truth. The reason for this belief ought to be self-evident, and it partially illuminates the matter under present consideration: human desires, fears and hopes tend to distort the truth in accordance thereto. In other words, where human desires and interests are concerned one is apt to deny certain uncomfortable facts which conflict with human wishes, while simultaneously emphasising those which comfort and console. It has, indeed, taken humanity millennia to emerge from its childish subjectivism, wherein the universe *in toto* was thought to have been created for the benefit and pleasure of human-beings. As a consequence thereof, many scientifically-minded individuals are apt to spurn subjectivism as infantile, distorting understanding and thus distancing knowledge from grasping the ultimate Truth. I can only add that in so far as subjectivism distorts reality it is indeed to be spurned. However, the conception of the subjective under present consideration does not intimate or concern subjective distortion in accordance with individual desires: the view I am attempting to present is rather one in which we seek to construe the universe from the individual or subjective stance. In other words, I am attempting to illustrate that the phenomena of sickness, old age and death perpetually and indisputably present themselves as unfavourable to living creatures.

With these thoughts in mind let us now turn, in an attempt to prove the correlation between the two, to an earnest consideration of the Schopenhauerian and Darwinian systems in relation to the subjective/objective dichotomisation. It seems to me that a potential reason Schopenhauer was never able to associate the struggle for survival with the process of evolution was due to the fact that he was, in the main, concerned with articulating a *subjective* characterisation of the struggle for existence, whereas Darwin, in contrast, was concerned with the *objective* form thereof. By this I portend that Schopenhauer was concerned with the subjective nature of suffering for individual creatures; and this interest can be discerned in the way in which he sought a way to attenuate or extinguish the unpleasantness caused thereby. Indeed, the third and fourth

books of *Die Welt* indicate Schopenhauer's penchant for religiosity and his devotion to the subjective *modus operandi*. We should not, however, be surprised by this fact, for by his own admission Schopenhauer (1969b: 5) maintains that the foundation of philosophical enquiry is the subjective: "*consciousness* alone is immediately given, hence the basis of philosophy is limited to the facts of consciousness". In contrast, Darwin was not in the main concerned with the subjective nature and consequences of suffering for an individual creature, but, rather, he sought to observe the physical consequences wrought by the battle between creatures for survival. Darwin's objective focus is, of course, to be expected, for "it is quite appropriate to the empirical standpoint of all the other sciences [excepting philosophy] to assume the objective world as positively and actually existing […]" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 5). Following Schopenhauer, we can regard the subjective standpoint as befitting of philosophical enquiry and the objective perspective as suitable to the physical sciences. Yet I maintain that we should not consider the opposing standpoints as fundamentally incompatible, but rather as mutually complementary. In this sense, the notion that the gradual evolution of life is driven by the struggle for existence may be considered an *objective* characterisation of the subjective Schopenhauerian doctrine of suffering; viewed *externally* we may observe the organic mutations generated thereby, whereas considered *internally* we inevitably discern the agony of life. In unison these two theories may be considered to offer the most exhaustive explanation of the world and life. Now it seems to me, that the question of the moral worth of life is pertinent solely in connection with the subjective standpoint: when one descends to the psychological view of a suffering creature the moral value of life becomes paramount. For the subjective standpoint views life and the world from the perspective of a living, *suffering* being. The questions pertaining to life's worth and purpose, at least from the subjective standpoint, are not frivolous. However, for a scientist concerned with the way in which conflict between creatures for survival (experienced subjectively as suffering) leads to a gradual evolution of such organisms those aforementioned questions and concerns are indeed trivial, for the objective scientist is not concerned with the personal agony of the individual. It seems to me that primarily for this reason, Bertrand Russell (1946: 786-787) notes, in his *History of Western Philosophy*, that "[from] a scientific point of view, optimism and pessimism are alike objectionable". In this Russell is undoubtedly correct, for science does not consider the universe in relation to human desires and concerns, it attempts – or at least *ought* – to remain as *objective*, that is to say, as

impervious to the human condition, as it possibly can. For instance, when a scientist (cf. Darwin, 2009b: 587-588) explicates the tremendous amount of offspring most creatures produce in order to ensure that at least some will survive to maturity in order thereby to pass on their genetic material to the subsequent generation, he does not take into consideration the *subjective* situation, i.e. the suffering, of the creatures concerned. In other words, the scientific method insists that the investigator consider the nature of the universe and existence *without* emotion and sympathy: he wishes solely *to know*, *to understand*, not *to feel, to empathise*. Hence the question of whether the world is conducive to optimism or pessimism does not arise for the empirical scientist.

It seems to me that this view of the scientific method finds corroboration in, and explicates, the cruel experiments often performed by scientists in an attempt to further human knowledge, for the objective desire for knowledge remains impervious to personal agony. But from the *subjective* standpoint, which is essentially foreign to the scientific method, the situation immediately appears diabolical: an innocent pup, for instance, is born into the world merely in order for his life to be extinguished in an agonizingly painful way by some scientist wishing to know the frivolous effects a particular chemical has upon an animate body. From the objective standpoint one can consider the effects thereof interesting, but from the subjective perspective the situation is extremely disquieting. Although objectivity does indeed illuminate many mysteries of the universe, it inadvertently neglects an extremely significant aspect thereof, viz., the subjectivism of a conscious creature; and it is from the subjective standpoint that the moral worth of existence is certainly not a superfluous one, as Russell (1946:786-787) appears to intimate. In other words, it is not in the least objectionable if a philosopher concerned with the art of living wishes to investigate the nature of the universe from the subjective perspective. Russell (1946: 787), however, subtly attempts to excoriate Schopenhauer's bleak view of existence by arguing that "optimism assumes, or attempts to prove, that the universe exists to please us, and pessimism that it exists to displease us. Scientifically, there is no evidence that it is concerned with us either one way or the other". This characterisation of the matter, however, appears to me to bungle the issue of life's moral worth. In the first place, Russell's description seems to intimate that a moral philosopher determines *a priori* the nature of the universe (i.e. in the case of Schopenhauer, that it is reprehensible) and subsequently attempts to corroborate this presupposition by way of experience; Russell's view intimates that the

world is not – in-itself – either beneficent or malevolent. However, this seems true only upon an entirely objective understanding: if one views life as an objective spectator then the phenomenon of suffering remains superfluous. The Darwinian struggle for existence can, for instance, be viewed in a detached manner: one merely attempts, without recourse to subjective experiences and moral judgments, to describe the way in which perpetual competition and strife between creatures leads to their gradual evolution. If, however, one were to descend to the subjective view an entirely different picture emerges: from a uniquely individual standpoint the universe may indeed portray itself as either beneficent or malevolent. This then, appears to intimate that the view ultimately depends on individual opinion; but this view, so it seems to me, discounts what it means to be a creature with desires in a harsh world. Let us not forget that the Darwinian theory of evolution by means of natural selection is considered the most plausible theoretical explanation for the plethora of organisms found on Earth. If a psychologist were to concur with the Schopenhauerian view that happiness ultimately depends on the satiation of a desire, then it would appear that life must either be filled with more suffering or happiness, depending on whether one's desires are satisfied or not. Here, of course, suffering, i.e. unfulfilled or thwarted volition, must be equated with the bad, and happiness, i.e. the satiation of volitional strivings, with the good. Thus, in proportion as either suffering or happiness predominate in life it may be said to be either good or bad. The matter then, may appear to be entirely relative: one individual may consider his life, on the whole, to be filled with happiness, whereas another may be drawn to the conclusion that his life was one of sorrow and dissatisfaction. It may seem as though an objective determination of life's worth is impossible to attain. But, if we ascend from our daily, mundane, lives and consider the matter *sub specie aeternitatas* we at once discern the truth of three of the so-called "four sights" apprehended by the Buddha, viz., the inevitability of old age, sickness and death. We may assume that these three inevitabilities are antithetical to the pursuit of happiness, for every creature is imbued with the *Wille-zum-Leben* which ultimately seeks youth, health and eternal life – not solely for itself, but also for those others on whom its happiness partially depends. If then, from this lofty standpoint, life is not – and can never be – in accordance with the ultimate wishes of animate creatures it must necessarily perpetually present itself as a tragedy, i.e. the sagacious individual must ultimately bear the cloak of pessimism. Indeed, I observe that such observations preclude the possibility of *a wise optimist* (which must be considered according to the

view here presented, as an oxymoron). These observations intimate that from the *subjective* perspective the question of whether life is ultimately conducive to the optimistic or the pessimistic temperament is not a superfluous matter.

But let us return to Russell's (1946: 786-787) criticism of Schopenhauer's pessimism; which, as I mentioned, intimates that such a view was a foregone conclusion. In essence, it would appear that Russell is accusing Schopenhauer of spuriousness. For if a philosopher is authentic he, like the authentic scientist, will not attempt to describe the universe in accordance with preconceived notions and dogmas. In contrast, the religious individual may be taken as *dishonest* in so far as he attempts to describe the world in accordance with his preconceived dogmas about the universe. It is primarily for this reason that a great thinker should be irreligious, or at the very least sceptical of the religious dogmas inculcated in him as a youth, for if his aim is merely to corroborate unfounded notions, his investigations – be they of a philosophical or a scientific nature – will inevitably produce spurious results. The genuine great thinker – whether a philosopher or a scientist – approaches the world like an ignorant child: in theory he does not possess any preconceived notions of that which he undertakes to investigate, but enters in upon it as though he were a *tabula rasa*, allowing it to impress upon him its multifarious impressions: the results of his investigations are unbeknownst to him and he ought always to be prepared to revise his views in accordance with fresh data. In contradistinction thereto, the religious individual seeks always to corrupt the facts in order to make them harmonize with his preconceived ideas: if he believes the world to be the work of an omniscient, omnipotent, benevolent creative force then every horror and disaster must be made congenial in order to accord with the way in which he believes the world ought to be. Thus, Russell's criticism of Schopenhauer's bleak view of life appears to presuppose that Schopenhauer was dogmatically predisposed to pessimism. Psychologically, this may have been true; but I wish to observe that Schopenhauer's philosophy arose *from* a consideration of the world: he did not first produce his philosophical system and subsequently attempt to find corroborations for it within the world, as religious optimists attempt to do. Furthermore, even if Schopenhauer were psychologically predisposed to a pessimistic temperament, he would undoubtedly have had to revise his views in accordance with irrefragable facts to the contrary. Rather, it appears that an earnest consideration of life from the

subjective sphere will offer ample corroboration for the pessimistic stance: old age (if we are fortunate enough to reach such a point), sickness and death await us all.

I note further, in accordance with the view adumbrated in the aforementioned section, that Schopenhauer (1974b: 373-375) is decidedly opposed to vivisection, whereas Darwin, although opposed to wanton cruelty, argues that such experiments on living animals may be justified on the grounds that it may potentially further human knowledge and happiness.[167] Unlike the scientific method, Schopenhauer considers the brutality of existence from the *subjective* standpoint, his philosophical system can, therefore, be taken as a dovetail to the scientific method, thereby completing (by offering a subjective characterisation alongside the objective) the description of the universe. This seems obvious in so far as science is concerned with the *objective* investigation of the world, i.e. a consideration of physical phenomena independent of their relation to human concerns. Thus, from the objective scientific perspective the question of the moral significance of the struggle for existence or the eventual death of the Sun is utterly superfluous; for the task of science is merely to hypothesise about and describe phenomena independently of the human relation thereto; however, in our modern scientific era, we have, to a large extent neglected the subjective sphere. In

[167] In a letter originally published in *The Times* on the 18th of April 1881 and later in *Nature* and the *British Medical Journal* Darwin stated: "[…] I have all my life been a strong advocate for humanity to animals, and have done what I could in my writings to enforce this duty […] On the other hand, I know that physiology cannot possibly progress except by means of experiments on living animals, and I feel the deepest conviction that he who retards the progress of physiology commits a crime against mankind […] What improvements in medical practice may be directly attributed to physiological research is a question which can be properly discussed only by those physiologists and medical practitioners who have studied the history of their subjects; but as far as I can learn, the benefits are already great. However this may be, no one, unless he is grossly ignorant of what science has done for mankind, can entertain any doubt of the incalculable benefits which will hereafter be derived from physiology, not only by man, but by the lower animals. Look, for instance, at Pasteur's results in modifying the germs of the most malignant diseases, from which, as it so happens, animals will in the first place receive more relief than man. Let it be remembered how many lives and what a fearful amount of suffering have been saved by knowledge gained of parasitic worms through the experiments of Virchow and others on living animals".

order to develop compassion for our fellow creatures, we should at all times bear in mind the subjective stance and the suffering that invariably attends it.

In concluding this discussion I may be permitted to state that the Darwinian theory of evolution by means of natural selection is just as pessimistic as Schopenhauer's philosophy; but due to the fact that it pursues an *objective* mode of exploration, without concerning itself with the personal agony of creatures, it does not seem to warrant the characterisation. However, if it be considered the objective counterpart to the subjective Schopenhauerian view its inherent pessimism becomes evident. It is in this sense, therefore, that I consider the Darwinian theory as offering a corroboration to the pessimistic view of life.

It ought to be evident, then, that Schopenhauer's pessimism is inextricably connected to his metaphysics. In other words, the world is precisely as it is, viz., evil, due to the fact that the essence of everything is an insatiable metaphysical Will. Yet, in the subsequent section we shall see that Schopenhauer also identifies the Will as, ordinarily, indestructible. Consequently, I have engaged in a protracted discussion on Schopenhauer's pessimism in order to raise the question as to how consoling Schopenhauer's doctrine of athanasia actually is. For it seems as little comforting to be told that upon dying one will return to an evil essence as it would to be told that after death one would be committed to the furnace of hell. Hence, irrespective of the veracity or falsity of Schopenhauer's doctrine, it appears that his consolation for the inevitability of death is in fact terribly disturbing. I shall return to this pertinent matter in the subsequent primary section, for the moment let us consider Schopenhauer's evaluation of life's worth.

5.6. Schopenhauer's Evaluation of Life's Worth

"*Gut ist der Schlaf, der Tod ist besser – freilich das beste wäre, nie geboren sein.*"[168]

- Heinrich Heine, *Morphine*

One final difficulty pertaining to the pessimistic view which needs to be considered is Schopenhauer's evaluation of existence, viz., that, in response to Hamlet's (Act III, Scene I) famous question, it would be "better not to be". We have seen that Schopenhauer characterises existence in extremely pessimistic terms and this necessarily leads him to the seemingly bleak conclusion that it would be better not to exist (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 325, Schopenhauer, 1969b: 576, 605 and Schopenhauer, 1974b: 299). However, we must now earnestly enquire as to what precisely Schopenhauer portends thereby. Here we must distinguish between three aspects of the notion that non-existence would be preferable to existence, viz., (i) that it would have been better not to have been born, (ii) that it is unconscionable to beget children and (iii) that once born the next best thing is to return to the unconscious state as rapidly as possible. In the subsequent sections I shall consider in detail all three possibilities.

5.6.1. It Would Have Been Better not to Have Been Born

It is fairly well-known that Schopenhauer's bleak view of existence leads him to a negative evaluation of life's worth; thus, in the first volume of his *magnum opus* he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 325) intimates the desirability of non-existence by remarking:

> "[…] the shortness of life, so often lamented, may perhaps be the best thing about it."

In the second volume of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969b: 576) offers more explicit statements on the preferability of non-existence:

[168] "Sleep is good, death is better; but of course, the best thing would be never to have been born at all."

> "[…] that we have not to be pleased but rather sorry about the existence of the world; that its non-existence would be preferable to its existence; that it is something which at bottom ought not to be […]"

And again, on page 605 of the second volume:

> "In fact, nothing else can be stated as the aim of our existence except the knowledge that it would be better for us not to exist."

Furthermore, in the second volume of *Parerga und Paralipomena* Schopenhauer (1974b: 299) once again intimates the preferability of non-existence when he states:

> "If we picture to ourselves roughly as far as we can the sum total of misery, pain, and suffering of every kind on which the sun shines in its course, we shall admit that it would have been much better if it had been just as impossible for the sun to produce the phenomenon of life on Earth as on the Moon, and the surface of the Earth, like that of the Moon, had still been in a crystalline state.
>
> We can also regard our life as a uselessly disturbing episode in the blissful repose of nothingness."

Finally, Schopenhauer (1969b: 588) approvingly quotes Byron's life-denying words:

> "Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
>
> Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
>
> And know, whatever thou hast been,
>
> 'Tis something better not to be."

Now if we take such utterances in the first sense, i.e. as to portend that it would have been better not to have been born in the first place, we are faced with a conspicuous dilemma: for only an *extant* creature – that is to say one which *has* been born – can entertain such thoughts and utter such words. Hence, were we to construe Schopenhauer's negative evaluation of existence in the first sense, i.e. as a lamentation that one was born, it would, upon close philosophical consideration, appear to be utterly superfluous, a mere peevish rant. To lament the occurrence of something which has occurred and cannot be undone is in the last analysis futile and causes unnecessary psychological torment, for once we are extant we cannot alter the fact that we were born. But philosophy, by its very nature, seeks to mitigate suffering, for otherwise it is,

in Epicurus' words, "useless" (quoted in De Botton, 2000: 55). I therefore cannot imagine that Schopenhauer would propound a notion which would induce profound psychological torment; consequently, I maintain that we can confidently rule out this option as his intended meaning.

5.6.2. It is Unconscionable to Beget Children

A second possibility, closely related to the first, is to construe Schopenhauer as a proponent of anti-natalism, i.e., the view that it is morally wrong to beget children. Upon a superficial understanding of Schopenhauer's philosophy this may appear acceptable, for in the second volume of *Parerga und Paralipomena* Schopenhauer (1974b: 300) rhetorically enquires:

> "Let us for a moment imagine that the act of procreation were not a necessity or accompanied by intense pleasure, but a matter of pure rational deliberation; could then the human race really continue to exist? Would not everyone rather feel so much sympathy for the coming generation that he would prefer to spare it the burden of existence, or at any rate would not like to assume in cold blood the responsibility of imposing on it such a burden?"

Indeed, rational reflection on the nature of existence seems to declare that "[…] children may at times appear to be like innocent delinquents who are condemned not to death, it is true, but to life and have not yet grasped the purport of their sentence" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 298-299). Thus, in these utterances one may justifiably construe Schopenhauer as arguing in favour of the anti-natalist position; but upon closer consideration of his philosophy it becomes evident that the imputation of an anti-natalist attitude thereto is in fact erroneous. In short, the act of merely refraining from having children does not in-itself ensure the end of the world of appearance. This view will only appear bizarre to a mind thoroughly saturated with the doctrine of materialism, in which solely hollow phenomenal objects are accorded actuality. Here, therefore, we must recall Schopenhauer's dichotomisation between the metaphysical Will on the one hand, which is said to be the *ens realissimum*[169] (Schopenhauer, 1889: 376) and, on the

[169] "The most real being".

other, the world of appearances or the phenomenal world. For even though the human race would, in the course of time, become extinct due to sexual abstinence, the Will as *Ding-an-sich* would remain and re-manifest itself *ad infinitum*. Thus, the mere abstention of procreation is not, from a Schopenhauerian standpoint, sufficient in bringing the world of suffering to an end. As Schopenhauer (1969a: 400) states: "[the abolition of the Will] is not possible through physical force, such as the destruction of the seed or germ, the killing of the new-born child, […] suicide", or, we might add, by way of abstention from procreation. Therefore, it would be erroneous to construe Schopenhauer's philosophy as tacitly venerating sexually active lifestyles which do not lead to the production of children, such as protective vaginal sex, mutual masturbation, oral sex and intercourse *per anum* (cf. Schopenhauer, 1974b: 318). In the appendix I propound a view which illustrates how such sexual activity, even though it does not lead to the production of progeny, actually augments the metaphysical Will; thereby producing more suffering in the world of appearance. Paradoxically, then, Schopenhauer (1969a: 400; 1974b: 318) encourages the production of offspring in the hope that they will follow the ascetic lifestyle and thus ultimately abrogate the portion of Will which animates their bodies.

In other words, from a Schopenhauerian perspective, all forms of sexual activity – especially those which do not lead to procreation – are to be avoided; consequently, Schopenhauer may be considered an anti-natalist solely in a very limited or a circuitous sense, i.e. not in so far as he actively discourages the production of children, but solely as a subsidiary consequence of the ascetic lifestyle which demands complete abstinence. As a consequence of these musings I may be permitted to remark that it is acceptable then, from a Schopenhauerian perspective, for one – such as Leo Tolstoy – to beget children and subsequently assume the life of a mendicant; for although in the act of procreation the metaphysical Will has, on my account, been caused to augment there is a twofold boon in such circumstances: on the one hand there is the abrogation of the Will which animates the saint's body, i.e. at the moment of such a one's death by way of voluntary starvation the Will residing therein is dissolved (cf. the appendix); on the other hand, the *possibility* of the mendicant's children one day following in their parent's footsteps intimates that the metaphysical Will, which was caused to augment by way of the pleasures experienced in the act of procreation and the production of a

new life, might eventually be annulled, thus reducing the amount of suffering in the world to the point at which it was prior to the individual's birth.

In conclusion, the above considerations illustrate that the anti-natalist position cannot be considered Schopenhauer's intention when he (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 576, et al.) speaks of the preferability of non-existence.

5.6.3. To Rapidly Return to the Unconscious State

This leads, therefore, to the final possibility, viz., that one ought to strive for a speedy return to the state of unconsciousness. However, this final possibility may generate some confusion; for it may be construed as a prescription of suicide. Let us therefore turn to a consideration thereof.

5.6.3.1. Schopenhauer's Views on Suicide

As Copleston (1947: 91) and Jacquette (2008: 302) note, Schopenhauer's pessimism would appear to favour suicide as a possible solution to the problem of existence. However, it may come as a surprise to learn that Schopenhauer (1969a: 398-402) did not in fact condone (ordinary, i.e. non-ascetic) suicide, in so far as he does not consider it as offering a genuine liberation from the torments of life. Now although I discuss this difficult matter at length in the appendix I shall here succinctly adumbrate Schopenhauer's view in an attempt to make the matter as perspicuous as possible. Although he does not consider it a crime, Schopenhauer (1974b: 309) maintains that suicide is a *mistake* in so far as it is "opposed to the attainment of the highest moral goal since it substitutes for the real salvation from this world of woe and misery one that is merely apparent". What, we must justifiably enquire, does Schopenhauer portend by this notion?

Schopenhauer's view is, as with everything in his philosophy, founded upon his metaphysics: thus suicide is said to be a mistake (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 309) or "quite a futile and foolish act" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 399) in so far as it cannot really offer liberation from the metaphysical Will; "for the [*Ding-an-sich*] remains unaffected by

it, just as the rainbow remains unmoved, however rapidly the drops may change which sustain it for the moment" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 399). If death truly offered absolute annihilation, then "we would undoubtedly choose it in view of the state of the world. [But], '[a]y, there's the rub'" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 308). In other words, the Will, which constitutes our essence, cannot be "destroyed by physical force" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 400) and hence death by way of violent self-destruction or natural means does not offer the benefit of absolute annihilation, which would, of course, ensure our utter non-existence.

We may note here, therefore, that any solution to the problem of existence must ultimately strive to abrogate the metaphysical Will; and such an act is said to occur in the case of the ascetic, who intentionally shuns life's pleasures and incessantly seeks the disagreeable:

> "[…] [i]t is not merely the phenomenon, as in the case of others, that comes to an end with death, but the inner being itself that is abolished […] for him who ends thus, the world has at the same time ended." (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 382).

But I must acknowledge that two glaring contradictions arise in Schopenhauer's system at this point. The first is that Schopenhauer (1969a: 128-129) claims that the dissolution of the Will in one body would necessarily entail the dissolution of the Will *in toto*, for the atemporality and aspatiality of the metaphysical Will intimates that it is a unity; hence if the Will were to dissolve in the saint it ought to absolutely vanish in every other phenomenal manifestation. This is a dogmatical point which is utterly at variance with Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine. Thus if one were to accept it he would necessarily be compelled to reject the possibility of the abrogation of the Will in the ascetic saint. As a consequence, I reject this notion and in the appendix I argue that the dissolution of the metaphysical Will can only be brought about through an act of suicide by starvation, a matter I shall shortly elaborate upon. I mention this because it seems to me that the most cogent refutation of this dogmatical doctrine is that of experience: of course, there have been instances of ascetics dying by intentional starvation, in particular among the Jains (Wiley, 2004: 181-182), without the world dissolving therewith; consequently, it seems that Schopenhauer's aforementioned pronouncement is erroneous and can be dismissed.

The second, and more significant, contradiction pertains to the fact that although the Will is said to be capable of dissolution in the ascetic at the moment of his death, the Will is also said to be indestructible (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 400). Thus how can that which is indestructible also be said to be capable of dissolution in certain (exceptional) circumstances? The solution thereto, it seems to me, is to be found in the ascetic practices, which tend to mitigate the vehemence of volitions. Paradoxically, the abstention of fulfilling potent desires seems to attenuate them; thus if we take this notion to the extreme and assume that one dies due to an ascetic practice, viz., by way of intentional starvation, it may be attributed to the total dissolution of the Will. Hence, I argue that in order to be entirely consistent, Schopenhauer ought to have concluded his *opus maximum* by arguing that the metaphysical Will dissolves solely in one *who dies by asceticism*. For if the Will exists in an attenuated state in the ascetic – as indeed it must, given the fact that the Will and the body are said to be identical (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100) – it does not follow that it should miraculously, *deus ex machina*, dissolve at the moment of his death. I maintain that an *ascetic practice* ought to destroy the Will thereby inducing death as a necessary consequence thereof; as opposed to the traditional view which regards the Will as miraculously vanishing as a consequence of the death of the ascetic. The latter is illogical, for why should the Will only utterly dissolve in the case of the ascetics and not among laypeople? This is the main theme of the argument to be found in the appendix.

As a consequence of this contradiction, and in order to render the matter intelligible, I must here anticipate my resolution thereof in the discussions to be found in the proceeding chief section and in the appendix, for, in order to fully comprehend Schopenhauer's view, it is necessary to dichotomize between two types of death, viz., an ordinary, non-ascetic one and another occasioned by the most extreme form of asceticism, i.e. suicide by starvation. An ordinary, i.e. non-ascetic, death cannot abrogate the metaphysical Will; which is, it will be recalled, the source of all strife and consequently suffering in the world. It is necessary to mention that most forms of suicide are non-ascetic in so far as they are not occasioned by a mortification of the Will; indeed, with the sole exception of suicide by starvation (cf. the appendix), all forms of suicide are characterised, according to Schopenhauer (1969a: 398), as vehement affirmations of the Will.

Thus Schopenhauer (1969a: 398) paradoxically argues that an individual who commits suicide is not, as is commonly assumed, one who has lost his will-to-live; on the contrary, such an act of self-destruction has been motived, according to him (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 398), by the most vehement form of willing, for the suicide "[…] wills life, wills the unchecked existence and affirmation of the body; but the combination of circumstances does not allow of these, and the result for him is great suffering" (ibid). In a fit of frustration and rage the wilful individual is thus led to the act of suicide; but such a one is said by Schopenhauer to have possessed a burning desire to end his torment, not his life *per se*. This subtle, albeit significant, point can be best evinced in the fact that if the circumstances permitted a congenial atmosphere or outcome the suicidal individual would *not* have wished to end his life. The individual who commits suicide due to unrequited love, for instance, does so out of a frustration that he cannot obtain the desired sentiments from his love-object, not out of a disgust or horror at existence as such and *in toto*. If his beloved were to return his amorous sentiments his frustration and longing for destruction – which is psychologically defined by Freud (cited in Sadock and Sadock, 2007: 900) as anger directed towards the self – would dissipate. But here I wish to emphasise a seemingly tangential point, which is, in fact, of immense significance: the non-ascetic suicide is motived to self-destruction by *personal* suffering, i.e. *egoism* (Young, 2005: 195), whereas, in contrast thereto, the ascetic saint, according to my interpretation, is prompted to suicide by *altruistic incentives*, i.e. the desire to mitigate the total amount of suffering in the world. The former wishes to annul his personal, individual suffering, whereas the latter exacerbates his discomfort in order to affect a transcendental change, thereby preventing the re-manifestation of the portion of his Will, and thus removing the possibility of suffering in other, as yet unborn, creatures. Although it is a mere truism, it is for this reason that ordinary suicide is an affirmation of the *Wille-zum-Leben*, whereas the ascetic form of suicide is a denial thereof. All this is discussed at length in the appendix; however, the point to be emphasised is that in cases in which a wilful individual commits suicide the Will, upon an orthodox reading of the Schopenhauerian philosophy, remains intact (in contradistinction to my interpretation, in which the metaphysical Will is so said to augment) and can therefore re-manifest itself into the world of appearances as a new creature to suffer and ultimately die. This process of *Samsara* will recur perpetually until eventually – if, indeed, ever – the Will finds itself manifested in an individual who resolves to follow the ascetic lifestyle. However, in

the case of ordinary, i.e. non-ascetic, suicide the act merely brings an individual existence to an end, but it does not affect the Will as *Ding-an-sich*.

Of course, this argument against suicide, viz., that it is a futile undertaking in so far as it does not destroy the Will as *Ding-an-sich*, may appear inadequate, for a potential suicide is concerned solely with *his* suffering; it is highly unlikely that Schopenhauer's argument would dissuade one from committing such an act. For a tormented individual contemplating suicide is, as Julian Young (2005: 195) notes somewhat disparagingly "exceptionally self-obsessed". The non-ascetic suicide wishes solely to bring *his* suffering to an end, the sufferings of yet unborn creatures which shall arise by way of *palingenesis* from the re-manifestation of his portion of the metaphysical Will are, to him, superfluous and unlikely to prevent him from taking his own life. However, we should guard against reading Schopenhauer as presenting a *prohibition* on the act of suicide; but as merely explicating the ultimate futility of such an undertaking (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 309). But in order to comprehend this one must bear in mind the metaphysical Will and assume a higher, i.e. universalistic, moral stance; in other words, one must take upon oneself the sufferings of the *entire* world and wish to end the tragedy of existence *in toto*. For if one apprehends that the ubiquitous Will is the ultimate source or cause of *Leiden*,[170] one may realise that suffering is not idiosyncratic or limited to the "unfortunate few"; on the contrary, existence as such is thoroughly permeated by sorrow. It is hoped that this realisation will ultimately lead to compassion for our fellow sufferers, which will, in turn, lead to the ascetic lifestyle, as the sole genuine solution to the problem of existence. Here then we arrive at an understanding of the initial mysterious utterance, i.e. the absolute destruction of one's portion of the metaphysical Will by way of an ascetic lifestyle is the only acceptable way in which to construe the claim that "non-existence is preferable to existence".

In concluding this discussion I may be permitted to make one final significant observation, which I take to be a corroboration of my maverick interpretation of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine. I cannot accept as legitimate those interpretations[171] which attempt to argue for the acquisition of personal benefit for the

[170] "Suffering".

[171] Cf. for instance, Robert Wicks' (2008: 128 & 132-133) and Julian Young's (2005: 195-206) interpretations.

saint by adhering to the ascetic lifestyle; for I observe that if the saint merely strives at a nullification of the Will solely within himself in order to attain *personal* satisfaction, then he might just as well spend his existence contemplating works of art or commit (ordinary, i.e. non-ascetic) suicide. For if the ascetic lifestyle is construed as a path to liberation from *personal* suffering it does not differ at all from aesthetic contemplation or ordinary suicide, at bottom it is in fact identical therewith. Moreover, the ascetic practices actually exacerbate personal suffering; hence it would appear odd that one should augment one's personal agony in order to mitigate it. Thus, although I acknowledge that my interpretation of Schopenhauer's ascetic doctrine is extremely unorthodox and audacious it appears to me to be the only truly acceptable one, in spite of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 128-129) assertions to the contrary and the numerous predicaments (discussed at length in the appendix) it inevitably generates.

5.6.3.2. Schopenhauer's Soteriological Doctrine

Thus it is evident that the rapid return to the state of unconsciousness cannot be construed as an encouragement to suicide; or, at least, to an ordinary, i.e. non-ascetic, form thereof. Instead we ought to construe Schopenhauer's (1969b: 576; 605) statements as an intimation to follow the ascetic lifestyle thereby abrogating the portion of the Will which animates the body. Now I will not enter here into a prolix discussion on this complicated matter, which I was compelled to touch upon while discussing Schopenhauer's views on suicide, and furthermore can be found in the appendix of this dissertation; instead I refer readers thereto once a sufficient understanding of Schopenhauer's views in this section have been grasped. For our present purposes I wish to mention the only acceptable means by which one should perish according to my interpretation of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine.

It is interesting to note that in his doctrine of salvation one can best discern the religiosity of Schopenhauer and that of his system, in spite of his undeniable atheism (Edwards, 2009: 173). For although it is difficult to define the concept of religion (Hick, 1990: 2) one feature that most religious systems have in common is, as John H. Hick (1990: 3) notes, "a concern with what is variously called salvation or liberation". Hence it is no exaggeration to say that the Schopenhauerian philosophy can, in a sense, be

considered a religion – with the Will as God and Schopenhauer as its arch-prophet or messiah. Consequently, in the Schopenhauerian soteriological doctrine we discover a way in which one may escape from the nightmare of existence; but therein I maintain that we also find the sense in which Schopenhauer (1969b: 605) states that "it would be better for us not to exist". In other words, it would be better for us not to exist *absolutely*, i.e. as Will, and not merely relatively, i.e. as phenomenal appearance; and this end can be achieved solely by way of the ascetic life.

It ought to be evident by now from the discussion on suicide, that Schopenhauer conceived of two types of death: one relative and the other absolute.[172] The former

[172] It is necessary to mention that this pronouncement is based upon a particular view of the assertion that the Will is akin to the *Ding-an-sich*. According to the orthodox view the Will is identical with the *Ding-an-sich*; while the maverick interpretation contends that the Will is merely one facet of the essence in-itself. If the *Ding-an-sich* is entirely Will then the abrogation of the latter would entail the destruction of the former, thus producing an "absolute nothingness"; whereas if the Will is merely one facet of the world as it is in-itself then the destruction thereof would produce only a "relative nothingness". To my mind the first volume (which is essentially the first edition) of *Die Welt* supports the "absolute nothingness" hypothesis – I say this in spite of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 409-410) explicit rejection of the notion of "absolute nothingness" in the concluding section, viz. 71, of the fourth book thereof. It is interesting to note that this section was already present in the first edition (1818/1819), intimating that Schopenhauer had always maintained that, besides the Will, there are other inscrutable dimensions to the *Ding-an-sich*. However, in the first volume of *Die Welt* it seems to me that the absolute identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich* is paramount, for besides the aforementioned section wherein Schopenhauer rejects the notion of absolute nothingness, there is no other insinuation of the multidimensional view; indeed, in spite of a controversy surrounding it (cf. John E. Atwell's *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World: The Metaphysics of Will*, chapter one) I consider the identification to be *der einzige Gedanke* ("the single thought") mentioned by Schopenhauer (1969a: xii) in the preface to the first edition. In the second volume (which is essentially the second edition), by contrast, Schopenhauer (1969b: 196) explicitly supports the "relative nothingness" hypothesis by claiming "[…] that even the inward observation we have of our own Will still does not by any means furnish an exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself". In spite of the fact that I do not think the Will is the *Ding-an-sich* as intended by Kant I have argued that a multidimensional view thereof vitiates Schopenhauer's philosophy and it should therefore be rejected if one wishes to fully

refers to an individual who perishes by non-ascetic means; in such a case the disappearance is illusory, for the Will which once animated the individual's body is reabsorbed into the metaphysical Will and, through the process of *palingenesis*, it is re-manifested into the world of appearances. Thus, for the individual who dies by non-ascetic means, his is a relative disappearance, it is solely the phenomenal individuality which is utterly destroyed, whereas the essential being is unscathed thereby. On the other hand, Schopenhauer (1969a: 400) intimates that the death of the ascetic saint leads to absolute destruction, i.e. both the Will as *Ding-an-sich* and its manifestation, the appearance, are abrogated at the moment of the ascetic's death. But such an event seems impossible, for as Copleston (1947: 91) notes:

> "Individual consciousness is indeed destroyed [in death], but man's inner nature, identical with Will, persists and can never be destroyed."

In the appendix of this dissertation I address this conspicuous paradox by invoking the distinction between non-ascetic and ascetic forms of death. In short, I illustrate that the *Ding-an-sich* is not impervious to alteration, but can in fact contract and augment. It follows, therefore, that the only way in which an individual can utterly abrogate the Will in oneself is by way of the ascetic lifestyle, but in particular by way of an intentional starvation unto death. I argue that the metaphysical Will is caused to contract by the ascetic practice of starvation which inevitably induces death as a consequence. However, I readily acknowledge that my solution thereto has led, among other difficulties, to an inadmissible conclusion concerning the application of the causal law. For the notion that the Will can, even under exceptional circumstances, dissolve, necessary leads to the maverick application of the law of causality to the realm of the *Ding-an-sich*. I admit that this is problematic for a philosophy which adopts the ideality of the causal law; however, there is, to my mind, no escaping this difficulty. In the appendix I attempt to offer a solution from a radical idealist perspective; however, in a later section (cf. 7.8.) I attempt to argue, contrary to the transcendental idealist view,

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engage with the latter's thought; for the Will is said to be the ultimate cause of all phenomena, including suffering, in the world. If, however, the *Ding-an-sich* is not entirely Will then there is no reason to suppose that the world will necessarily present itself as something evil; it follows that the significance of Schopenhauer's aesthetic and ascetic theories would become superfluous (cf. Wicks, 2008: 131-132).

that the law of causality, like that of time and space, does actually possess a mind-independentness of sorts; hence, if my analysis is veracious, the world as it is in-itself cannot be impervious to its influence. However, if my thesis, viz., that ascetic practices can cause the metaphysical Will to contract, is accepted, then we must affirm the alternative possibility, viz., that under certain circumstances the Will as *Ding-an-sich*, can also be caused to *expand*. My interpretation, contrary to that of Schopenhauer's static understanding, thus leads to a *dynamic* view of the *Ding-an-sich*, one in which it is perpetually augmenting and contracting in accordance with the actions performed in the phenomenal world.[173] I anticipate and encourage constructive criticism of my view; however, let us return to the primary matter at hand.

The distinction between two types of death leads to a significant conclusion. If it is best to rapidly return to the state of unconsciousness then one ought not merely strive for a relative annihilation, i.e. one in which one's subjectivity is destroyed but not the *Ding-an-sich*, as for instance in the case of the ordinary suicide; but rather one should endeavour for *absolute* annihilation, i.e. a state in which one's essence is, along with one's subjectivity, dissolved. In this way the portion of the Will which once animated the body cannot re-manifest itself into the phenomenal world and thus continue the tragedy of existence. Schopenhauer's solution to the problem of life is, therefore, the ascetic lifestyle, whereby one is ultimately able to abrogate the Will within oneself. Therefore, the only cogent sense in which Schopenhauer's view, viz., "that non-existence is preferable to existence", can be interpreted is that one ought to strive to return as rapidly as possible to the unconscious state by following the ascetic lifestyle and, according to my interpretation, perishing by way of intentional starvation. In that way one can truly be said to "not exist" in so far as one's inner essence has been destroyed and therefore cannot re-manifest itself in the phenomenal world.

[173] I may be permitted to compare this to humankind's primitive and modern understanding of the cosmos. Prior to Edwin Hubble's discovery that the galaxies are moving away from the Milky Way (Hawking, 2016: 46) it was erroneously maintained that the universe was static and eternal; however, nowadays it is known that the universe is in a constant state of expansion and is, therefore, in a constant state of transformation (Hawking, 2016: 46). Thus that which once, understandably, appeared to us as immutable and eternal, is in fact in a constant state of flux.

5.7. Is a Life of Suffering Really not Worth Living?

We must now enquire whether Schopenhauer's negative evaluation of life, i.e. the claim that it is not worth living, is vindicated. For although life may certainly be filled with immense suffering it does not follow that life is *not* worth living (cf. Young, 2005: 206). There are those who, in spite of their sorrows – or perhaps *because of them* – continue to live meaningfully. Are we to earnestly maintain that solely a life of contentment and pleasure is worth living? Perhaps we ought first to enquire as to the nature of contentment: Schopenhauer's "negativity of happiness" thesis offers a compelling explanation of the nature thereto, one which Nietzsche surreptitiously endorses and advances as his own. In *Der Antichrist*, for instance, Nietzsche (2003b: 127) states:

> "What is happiness? – The feeling […] that a resistance is overcome."

A resistance is evidently an obstacle to the satisfaction of a desire and thus Nietzsche appears to be arguing that happiness is the fulfilment of the striving towards an unsatisfied longing. Thus, upon a close consideration of the matter, it becomes evident that happiness cannot exist independently of unhappiness, as paradoxical as that may appear. In order for one to fully experience the exuberance of happiness one must first have been in a state of tormenting agony and dissatisfaction. Indeed, one cannot expect life to be solely happy, for such would render the concept meaningless. It is only by way of the contrary that happiness is comprehended and appreciated since "opposites illuminate each other" (Cartwright, 2005: 98). An existence of perpetual contentment would not be acknowledged as such, and instead "[…] people would die of boredom or hang themselves; or they would fight, throttle, and murder one another and so cause themselves more suffering than is now laid upon them by nature" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 293). This notion was first introduced in the section on Schopenhauer's "negativity of happiness" thesis but it is most eloquently expressed, as mentioned, by Nietzsche (2003: 332) in the fourth part of *Also Sprach Zarathustra* wherein suffering is shown to be inextricably bound to happiness:

> "For all joy wants itself, therefore it also wants heart's agony!"

However, it must be acknowledged that a serious difficulty arises in cases in which an individual cannot surmount suffering, such as the mental and physical aguish associated with the immanence of death as a consequence of a serious terminal illness. In such a

case, where the possibility of happiness seems genuinely to be incapable of ever returning – in so far as the obstacle cannot be surmounted, i.e. the terminal disease which will induce tremendous suffering cannot be cured – it seems to me that the negativity of happiness thesis cannot offer much consolation and that such a life is, in the last analysis, not worth living. For although the surmounting of an obstacle produces happiness the progression of a terminal illness will only exacerbate suffering without ever offering the possible return of jubilation. In short, a terminal illness will ensure that one's life progresses in a descent, wherein it may genuinely be said: "[i]t is bad today and every day it will get worse, until the worst of all happens" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 299). If we discount metaphysical theories – both the Schopenhauerian doctrine of the Will and the Indian theory of *Karma* – in such cases, wherein intense mental and physical suffering is experienced without the possibility of it ever being annulled, it is to my mind perfectly acceptable then to wish to rapidly return to the place from whence one arose by way of humane euthanasia. An individual who does not possess a metaphysical doctrine and yet emphatically insists on extending suffering is either diabolical or naively hopeful. Indeed, it is solely the pernicious influence of optimism devoid of metaphysics which criminalises euthanasia and prevents a suffering creature from attaining salvation from the torments of a harrowing terminal illness. In this sense Sigmund Freud's life and death are to be taken as a prototype: for he lived, in spite of physical torment due to his illness, until such a time as he acknowledged the suffering to outweigh the pleasures of his existence; it was then that he requested his doctor assist him in departing this *vallis lacrimarum*[174] sooner than was immanently inevitable.

I readily admit to difficult cases in regard to my thesis, for depressed individuals, in particular, believe that their condition is utterly hopeless; hence it may be argued that I tacitly abet the suicide of such individuals. This is certainly not so, for we must acknowledge that the lives of many severely depressed individuals are not as hopeless as they imagine; indeed, this belief in the utter futility and hopelessness of their lives is, in many instances, erroneous and is nothing but a distortion of their reality caused by their tormenting condition. I maintain that it is only when the possibility of happiness is *genuinely* and *entirely* at an end that one should entertain the possibility of humane euthanasia.

[174] "The vale of tears".

6. The Schopenhauerian Doctrine of Athanasia

Although it is not my intention to propound psychological analyses in an attempt to avow or discredit aspects of Schopenhauer's thought as others have unjustly attempted to do,[175] I wish to make the psychological observation that Schopenhauer's philosophical concern with death and athanasia certainly emanate from an extremely personal concern; for it appears that Schopenhauer was haunted by the inevitability of his death. In corroboration of this view I note that in biographies of the great philosopher it is often related that he had many anxieties surrounding his health and general well-being; for instance, it is often stated that:

> "[Schopenhauer] slept with loaded pistols by his bedside, and would not allow a barber to shave his neck. To avoid the possibility of drinking infected water he carried a leather water-flask; he would also lock away the stem and bowl of his tobacco pipe after he used it. He settled in Frankfurt (where he was to spend most of his later life) because of the high reputation of its doctors. And one could go on and on." (Berman, 1995: xviii).

It ought to come as no surprise then that the thanatophobic Schopenhauer is, as Simon Critchley (2008: 200) notes, "perhaps the modern philosopher who said most about death". Indeed, throughout Schopenhauer's (1969a: 274-286; 1969b: 463-509; 1974b: 267-282) works one can find references to his own mortality or to death in general;[176]

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[175] As Cartwright (2005: 190) notes, some commentators have attempted to portray Schopenhauer's relationship with his mother as an explanation for, and a consequent rejection of, his misogyny. Although such an explanation may have merit from a psychological perspective, it in no way refutes Schopenhauer's characterisation of women (although, of course, I am not thereby intimating that I accept his views thereon). The attempt to discredit a philosopher's theories by appealing to psychological explanations and diagnoses is in fact a subtle form of the *argumentum ad hominem* fallacy and therefore it has absolutely no place in a philosophical exposition.

[176] For instance, in the preface to the second edition (1847) of his doctoral thesis Schopenhauer (1889a: ix) states: "For I am aware that the time cannot be far off when all correction will be impossible; but with that time the period of my real influence will commence […]", intimating that the thought of death was not far from his mind even at the relatively young age of 59. In the first edition of *Die Welt*, published when Schopenhauer was only 30, there are numerous

and Singh (2010: 119) goes so far as to state that "no other subject is as important and as omnipresent in Schopenhauer's system as death". Indeed, following the influence of Socrates, Schopenhauer (1969b: 463) explicitly acknowledges death to be "the real inspiring genius […] of philosophy", making it clear that the fear of death is the impetus for all genuine philosophizing, including his own system. As such, it ought to come as no surprise that the lengthiest supplementary essay in the second volume of *Die Welt* is devoted to the topics of death and athanasia.[177]

6.1. The Anxiety of Death as a Uniquely Rational Phenomenon

As a point of departure it will be convenient to begin this significant discussion, which is the primary theme of my exposition, with the observation that the knowledge of the inevitability of death is uniquely human (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 463) – no other animal is as troubled by the prospect of death as is the *homo sapiens*. The reason for this is to be found in a form of the principle of sufficient reason which is idiosyncratic to the human race, viz., the *principium cognoscendi*, which has the concept (abstract idea) as its object (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 114). The *modus operandi* whereby the principle of sufficient reason of knowing is activated is the faculty of reason; and this faculty, Schopenhauer claims (1969b: 59 and 1889a: 114), is unique to the human species, *ergo*

references to death, cf. for instance section 54 in particular, pages 274-286. Furthermore, the lengthiest essay in the second volume of *Die Welt* is devoted to the themes of death and immortality (Cartwright, 2005: 36); and in the second volume of *Parerga und Paralipomena* one will also find an additional essay on the topic of athanasia, cf. section X, pages 267-282. It is evident that Schopenhauer was, as Singh (2010: 119) expresses it, a *thanatologist* and I conjecture that this was due to Schopenhauer's extreme thanatophobia.

[177] Chapter XLI, "*On Death and its Relation to the Indestructibility of our Inner Nature"*, pages 463-509. Schopenhauer (1974b: 267-282) added a supplementary discussion to these themes in the second volume of *Parerga und Paralipomena*. These two essays contain many beautiful consolatory remarks about death and the possibility of immortality which I encourage thanatophobic individuals to read in earnest.

is its object, the concept.[178] This view of the matter inevitably leads Schopenhauer (1969b: 278) to the conclusion that solely the human-animal possesses the abstract concepts of "past" and "future". It follows, then, that

> "[…] the consciousness of [non-rational] animals is a mere succession of present events, none of which, however, exists as future before its appearance, or as past after its disappearance, this being the distinctive characteristic of the human consciousness. Therefore the [non-rational animals] have infinitely less to *suffer* than have we, since they know no other sufferings than those directly brought about by the *present*. But the present is without extension; the future and the past, on the other hand, which contain most of the causes of our sufferings, are widely extended. To their actual content the merely possible is added, whereby an unlimited field is opened up to desire and fear. The [non-rational animals], on the other hand, are undisturbed by these; they peacefully and serenely enjoy every present moment, even if it is only bearable […] Further, the sufferings that belong *solely* to the present can be merely physical." (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 60-61).

As the above excerpt intimates, Schopenhauer (1974b: 296) maintains that the life of the human being is laden – by way of the abstract concepts of past and future – with

[178] This notion must, however, be qualified by the observation that such abstract knowledge is noticeably absent in the extremely young and the severely mentally disabled, both of whom, it may be justly argued, do not possess the faculty of reason. Nowadays, it is also believed that there are certain non-human animal species which possess ratiocination (Jones, 1991: 134). I mention this because it is not entirely correct to equate rationality with humanity, but this is precisely the way in which Schopenhauer (1889a: 114) considers the matter. As a consequence of the aforementioned facts however, it is certain that there are humans, i.e. the extremely young and the severely mentally impaired, who do not have an abstract apprehension of the inevitability death; whereas there are probably certain non-human animals which possess such an understanding. Therefore, in the subsequent discussion one should bear in mind that, despite the characterisation not being entirely accurate, humanness is associated with reason, whereas non-human animals are considered entirely non-rational, in accordance with Schopenhauer's (1889a: 114) view of the matter. Where possible, and in order to rectify this error, I have attempted to avoid characterising the distinction as that between humans on the one hand and non-human animals on the other; but rather as that of a distinction between "rational creatures" and "non-rational creatures".

more suffering than is the life of the non-rational animal, which lives solely in the present moment and is thus afflicted solely by physical torments. I maintain that a consideration of our own lives can reveal the veracity of Schopenhauer's pronouncements. All know, by way of direct experience, of the way in which the past and future can cause havoc on the composure of one's mind; the memory of past iniquities can haunt the human conscience, as can the uncertainty of the future. The rational-human, unlike the non-rational animal, thus worries about events long past and unalterable, on the one hand, and those which are not as yet actualised and may in fact never materialise, on the other. The abstract concept of the past makes *regret* – which is a uniquely human, i.e. rational, phenomenon – possible: one may conjure up scenes in one's mind and retrospectively wish that he had acted differently in the past by having done something or having omitted to do something else. Everyone knows from experience how agonizing a serious regret may be, and it is in this way that the faculty of reason – by way of contemplating the past – can augment suffering in a rational creature. As the phenomenon of regret is inextricably connected with the abstract concept of the past, we must assume that if a creature does not possess the abstract concept of "past" it cannot suffer from the torment of regret. Consequently, the torment of regret is restricted to all rational creatures.

In just the same way, if we now turn our attention from a retrospective to a prospective consideration, a creature devoid of the abstract concept of "future" will not be capable of suffering the pangs of *anxiety*: for the anxious state depends on the possibility of the occurrence of misfortune not immediately present, but existing in the unknown future of possibilities. For instance, an extremely wealthy man may be said to be anxious over the possibility of becoming a destitute pauper; he thus worries (suffers) about a potentiality, i.e. over something unreal and imaginary. Yet without the abstract concept of "future" his anxiety, like the phenomenon of regret without the abstract concept of "past", would be devoid of foundation and hence non-existent.

Hence, in connection with the view here adumbrated regarding the phenomena of regret and anxiety, I may be permitted to quote Nietzsche's (2003: 69) poetic words:

> "If I wanted to shake this tree with my hands I should be unable to do it. But the wind, which we cannot see, torments it and bends it where it wishes. *It is invisible hands that torment and bend us the worst*."

Hence, regret and anxiety – arising as they do from an abstract apprehension of past and future, respectively – are mere illusory figments of the imagination, i.e. the two "invisible hands" *par excellence*, which produce a suffering unique to rational creatures. In contrast thereto, the entire existence of a non-rational creature is restricted to the present moment which, by way of removing the past and future, mitigates the amount of suffering experienced thereby. It is primarily for this reason that Schopenhauer (1974b: 296) declares the non-rational animal to be "the embodiment of the present" and he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 296) considers this attribute to be the quality we most enjoy in connection with our domestic pets.[179]

Now, although it is true that the conception of past and future can augment one's suffering by way of regret and anxiety as I have discussed, it is necessary – in order merely to be honest and just – to emphasise that reason is not solely a tormentor but also a great liberator. In other words, reason is, to use a hackneyed expression, a "double-edged sword" (Jones, 1991: 135): it can both augment and attenuate our suffering. In the case of non-rational creatures it is true, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 60-61) states, that their suffering is limited to the present moment; for those that lack a retrospective and prospective apprehension can have neither regrets nor anxieties, respectively. But, we should be extremely cautious in concluding that as a consequence of the absence thereof the non-rational animal is *more* fortunate than its rational counterpart. For although the faculty of reason can augment suffering by way of regret and anxiety, it can also liberate one from the torments of the present moment. What is meant by this is that reason allows a creature who possesses it to escape the torments of the present moment by contemplating the past and the future: amidst the most awful catastrophes the rational animal is able to escape his present suffering by conjuring up jovial thoughts of his past or hopeful events in his future. In contrast thereto, the non-rational creature has no such consolation at his disposal, he is entirely subject to the torments of the present moment and consequently cannot evade his fear. When, for

[179] Interestingly, this ignorance concerning time, which is unique to non-rational animals, grants them a certain non-metaphysical immortality, for, following Wittgenstein (1922: 88), "if by eternity is understood not endless temporal duration but timelessness, then he lives eternally who lives in the present".

instance, an individual takes his beloved dog[180] to the vet he may feel greatly saddened by the animal's trepidation, which cannot be annulled by recourse to reason. In other words, one cannot attenuate a non-rational creature's fear – which is, by Schopenhauer's (1969b: 60-61) definition, always immediate – by appealing to past experiences[181] or to future occurrences.[182]

Now although it is evident that the faculty of reason can liberate one from suffering in the present moment, it must be borne in mind that contemplation of the past and future can, and more often does, severely torment. In the case of the human the apprehension of death extends to *anxiety* thereof, thereby augmenting the human capacity for suffering. Here it will be beneficial to the discussion to distinguish between the psychological concepts of fear and anxiety. Fear refers to sentiments of trepidation produced by the *immediate presence* of danger, whereas anxiety refers to trepidation for which no object is currently or immediately present. This distinction allows us to state that the non-human, non-rational animal is capable solely of fear (which, according to our definition, betokens the immediacy of some danger), whereas the rational-human is capable of both fear *and* anxiety. Consequently, I note that there is a subtle difference between fearing death and being anxious about it. The rational creature, unfortunately, possesses both these torments.

The anxiety of death is thus a uniquely rational phenomenon – compounded of both reason and Will[183] – and refers to the abstract conceptualisation of the inevitability of death. When, for instance, an individual experiences uncomfortable sentiments upon the contemplation of death which is not as yet immanent we may correctly say that he suffers from *anxiety* over the inevitability of death. I maintain that it is this anxious psychological state which encourages philosophical contemplation on the phenomenon of death. Technically speaking, then, it is the anxiety of death, and not the fear thereof, which induces a philosophical consideration of the matter (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 463). For in the case of one being confronted immediately with the prospect of death, the

[180] Assuming, of course, that dogs do indeed lack the faculty of reason.

[181] For instance, by saying to them: "this uncomfortable experience has never been as bad in the past as you imagine it will be, therefore you really have nothing to fear now".

[182] For instance, by reminding them: "in a little while you will be back at home and safe".

[183] I shall shortly elaborate upon this notion.

contemplation thereof would be absolutely impossible; indeed, it would be superfluous, for it would not preserve one's life. In life-threating situations one directs all one's energy to *survival*, the philosophical contemplation of death – which cannot preserve one's life – becomes redundant.[184]

Now with these notions firmly in mind we can proceed to a description of the way in which the abstract concept assists in the anxiety of death. For it is by way of the past (based on inductive reasoning) that the inevitability of death somewhere in the unknown future comes to beset the human mind more profoundly than any other and Schopenhauer (1969b: 463) thus refers to it as "the real inspiring genius […] of philosophy". For the human knows with the certainty of a seer that death will, sooner or later, come to him and to those he loves. This knowledge produces a profound anxiety and melancholy in the rational human which – like the phenomenon of regret – is noticeably absent in non-rational creatures. For the non-rational animal is entirely absorbed in the present moment and is consequently free from the torment of anxiety concerning the inevitability of death; indeed, as Schopenhauer (1974b: 296) notes, "it is just this *complete absorption in the present moment*, peculiar to [non-rational, non-human] animals, which contributes so much to the pleasure we derive from our domestic pets." Once the certainty of the inevitability of death dawns upon a rational mind it cannot but augment the suffering that an individual experiences; and thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 60-61) is vindicated in his view that the apprehension of abstract concepts contributes to humankind's greater capacity for suffering.

But, we must observe that despite the fact that reason – by way of induction – alerts us to the inevitability of death, the abovementioned discussion does not sufficiently explicate the ubiquity of the fear of death; which, it may be argued, is present as an apprehension of immediate danger even in the non-human animal (Schopenhauer, 1969b:465). In other words, if we concur with Schopenhauer that most non-human animals are devoid of ratiocination then it would appear an inexplicable anomaly that they too should fear death if that disquietude were founded solely upon rational

[184] In this connection I observe that Schopenhauer's consolatory philosophical doctrine on athanasia pertains specifically to the *anxiety* of death.

reflection. Indeed, the fact that even non-rational creatures fear death intimates that such trepidation cannot solely be the result of ratiocination. For although humans are aware of the fact that they will inevitably die, that knowledge in itself does not elucidate the phenomenon we are presently considering, viz., why one should in fact fear the inevitable. In fact, Schopenhauer (1969b: 465-466) argues that from a rational perspective death cannot be feared: for rationally considered it would appear, according to Schopenhauer (1974b: 268) "better not to be".[185] As such, far from causing a fear of annihilation, rational reflection can actually teach one that death is something to be *desired*.

6.2. The *Wille-zum-Leben* as the Ultimate Source of the Fear of Death

There is, therefore, evidently something more to the matter than mere reason. In other words, the mere contemplation of the inevitability of death is in itself insufficient in explicating the fear thereof. To that end we may justifiably speak of the fear of death as a *compounded* problem. To discover the second necessary – indeed, the essential – element in the production of the *fear* of death, which the non-rational creature possess in equal proportion with the rational, we must turn to the Schopenhauerian doctrine of the Will as *Ding-an-sich*. On the one hand, there is, as was just illustrated, the abstract concept of death, which alerts the rational creature to the inevitability of the cessation of life sometime in the unknown future; while, on the other, Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) notion of the Will grounding appearances intimates that a vehement desire for life exists within every creature. Here, therefore, it must be recalled that Schopenhauer (1969b: 510) maintains the Will to be essentially directed towards the continuance of life, not solely in the individual, but in *general*, i.e. in the multifarious extant species found throughout the world; he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 275) thus declares that "*was der Wille will immer das Leben ist"* – "[…] what the Will wills is always life"; hence "it is

[185] "Indeed, as a mature consideration of the matter leads to the result that complete non-existence would be preferable to an existence such as ours, the thought of a cessation of our existence, or a time when we shall no longer exist, cannot reasonably disturb us any more than can the idea that we might never have come into existence" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 268). I refer readers to the previous section wherein I discuss this matter in greater detail.

immaterial and a mere pleonasm if, instead of saying "the Will", we say the '[*Wille-zum-Leben*]'" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 275). Consequently, it is by way of the concept of the Will that Schopenhauer explicates both the ubiquity and the irrationality of the fear of death. For at bottom, all creatures contain within themselves an irrational urge to continue life, no matter how difficult and sorrowful it may be. Thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 465) states:

> "The fear of death is, in fact, independent of all knowledge, for the animal has it, although it does not know death.[186] Everything that is born already brings this fear into the world. Such fear of death, however, is *a priori* only the reverse side of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*], which indeed we all are. Therefore in every animal the fear of its own destruction, like the care for its maintenance, is inborn."

Thus it becomes perspicuous that the fear of death, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 465), originates primarily from the Will. Now as the Will is said to be "blind" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 466), i.e. without knowledge and consciousness, it follows that the fear of death is essentially *irrational* (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 465). In other words, the fear of death is nothing but the blind desire for life, i.e. "the reverse side of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*]" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 465), which exists in all organic creatures. As such, it follows that if the metaphysical Will were rational the predicament of death would not be a disturbance, for reason teaches that it is better not to be than to exist:

> "[…] The boundless attachment to life […] cannot have sprung from knowledge or reflection. To these, on the contrary, it appears foolish, for the objective value of life is very uncertain, and it remains at least doubtful whether existence is to be preferred to non-existence; in fact, if experience and reflection have their say, non-existence must certainly win. If we knocked on the graves and asked the dead whether they would like to rise again, they would shake their heads […] Knowledge […] far from being the origin of that attachment to life, even opposes it, since it discloses life's worthlessness, and in this way combats the fear of death." (Schopenhauer, 1969b:465-466).

[186] In other words, the non-human animal does not possess an abstract conception of death and therefore does not possess knowledge of it as an inevitability.

As mentioned, these remarks lead to the conclusion that the fear of death ultimately emanates from the *Wille-zum-Leben*, which constitutes the innermost kernel of all creatures (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 465). As a consequence thereof Schopenhauer (1969b: 465) is able to speak of non-rational animals as also possessing a fear of death, but we must observe that this trepidation is different to that of the *anxiety* concerning death which is found in humans (and other rational creatures). In other words, we must bear in mind the distinction we previously made between the fear of death on the one hand and the anxiety of death on the other: the abstract concept is associated with the latter, whereas the irrational Will is inextricably bound to the former. Consequently, if it makes any sense to speak meaningfully of an apprehension of death in non-rational creatures then it must be restricted to the immediate moment and relate to the *fear*, as opposed to the anxiety, of death. The non-rational animal has a presentiment of death, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 463), solely when its life is threatened; for given that they are non-rational they cannot abstractly contemplate the concept of death and thus the inevitability thereof is of no concern to them. As a consequence thereof the non-human animal lives as though its life is endless (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 463); and in a sense they are "immortal" (cf. Wittgenstein, 1922: 88).

However, I must observe a glaring contradiction inherent in Schopenhauer's theory. In the last section I argued, by way of Schopenhauer's (1969b: 329) argument for extending the Will throughout animate nature and his (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 560-567) theory of male homosexuality, that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* cannot, contrary to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 115 and 1969b: 466) repeated assertions to the contrary, be "without knowledge and blind"; in contradistinction thereto I describe the Will as a *conscious creative force* and a *designer* of phenomena. Hence it is a peculiarity of his system that the conscious Will, which, as we shall shortly see, is said to be indestructible (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 269), should fear annihilation.

Let us for the sake of argument, and in order to render the matter as perspicuous as possible, imagine that the Will were in fact blind. If this were so, then Schopenhauer could cogently argue that, deceived by the phenomenal mind, the Will, which is perpetually directed towards life (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 275), vehemently struggles against impending and certain annihilation. However, the fear would, as I intimated, in fact be illusory in so far as only one's phenomenal appearance is susceptible to extinction through death, whereas the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is indestructible

(Schopenhauer, 1974b: 269) and consequently immortal. Here, therefore, the Will's blindness becomes paramount and one can finally apprehend my reasons for according it so much attention in the second section of the first part of my exposition. I reiterate that in the course of my discussion I argued that the Will cannot in fact be conceived of as "blind" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 115), but that it must be conscious and cognisant of the creatures it brings into existence.

Now if the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is, as I argued, conscious, then it ought to *know* that it is indestructible (cf. Schopenhauer 1974b: 270); hence the destruction of the phenomenal form ought to be impertinent to it, i.e. the metaphysical Will ought to remain nonchalant in the face of impending death. In short, the contradiction I am attempting to render perspicuous is this: if the Will is indestructible (1974b: 269), but conscious, and not as Schopenhauer (1969b: 465-466) emphatically insists "irrational and blind", then why should it fear death, when annihilation is merely the destruction of the phenomenal appearance and not the Will as *Ding-an-sich* (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 270)? It seems to me, therefore, that the identification of the metaphysical Will as a rational and conscious entity generates profound complications for Schopenhauer's notions about the fear of death.

However, in spite of this difficulty, Schopenhauer's (1969b: 463-466) theory as to the origins of the trepidation concerning death is rather straightforward to comprehend: the fear of annihilation, although ultimately illusory (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 270), is produced by way of both the metaphysical Will and the adventitious (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 466) human mind; i.e. working in unison the Will and the mind induce a fear of destruction. The "irrational and blind" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 465) Will incessantly strives to continue and perpetuate life (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 275), while the phenomenally orientated animal brain deceives the metaphysical Will into believing that the annihilation of its phenomenal manifestation is tantamount to its own destruction. But, I reiterate that this argument is necessarily dependent upon the supposed irrationality and blindness of the metaphysical Will (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 465), a view I previously refuted and rejected. However, this is not my ultimate grievance with Schopenhauer's theory of death and athanasia. In the second part of my exposition I shall present numerous criticisms which attempt to refute Schopenhauer's radical idealism and his claim that the Will is the *Ding-an-sich*; thereby ultimately rendering Schopenhauer's theory untenable.

6.3. Some Preliminary Consolations for the Inevitability of Death

It is evident then, that, for Schopenhauer (1969b: 465-466), the *fear* of death is not a product of rational reflection; but ratiocination does augment one's agony in so far as it produces an anxiety about the prospect of death, even in instances where it is not threateningly immanent. Yet this is solely one side of the "double-edged sword" (Jones, 1991: 135) that is reason; and previously I alluded to reason's ability to liberate one from the torments of the present moment. In this way ratiocination can mitigate some of the anxiety surrounding the inevitability of death, and thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 463) argues that

> "[…] just as everywhere in nature a remedy, or at any rate a compensation, is given for every evil, so the same reflection that introduced the knowledge of death also assists us in obtaining *metaphysical* points of view. Such views console us concerning death, and the [non- rational] animal is neither in need of nor capable of them."

Thus, just as reason is the source of the anxiety concerning the inevitability of death (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 463), it is also the origin of consolatory thoughts pertaining thereto. Of course, it is safe to assume that Schopenhauer took his metaphysical theory to offer the greatest consolation, and in a moment I shall elaborate upon it at length. However, for the present moment I want to focus on some of the other consolatory thoughts which emanate from reason concerning the inevitability of death propounded by Schopenhauer (1969b: 463-468) in the course of his discussion in chapter XLI in the second volume of *Die Welt*.

The first consolation is founded upon the observation that were the anxiety of death merely a product of rational contemplation it seems that we should "think with equal horror of the time [prior to birth] when as yet we did not exist" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 466). Schopenhauer (1969b: 466) correctly points out that because the contemplation of non-existence prior to birth does not fill our hearts with trepidation it cannot be non-existence we fear in fearing death; for the non-existence prior to one's birth is in all respects akin to the non-existence after one's death. In this connection it will be pertinent to recall the fact presented in the third section of the first part of the exposition,

viz., that *consciousness* is a *necessary* ingredient in the production of suffering.[187] Now due to the fact that one cannot recall the period before one's birth (owing, of course, to the absence of consciousness) it is evident that non-existence cannot be experienced as a state of suffering and consequently as an evil. Thus, rational reflection teaches us that non-existence is absolutely nothing to be feared, for without consciousness non-existence is impervious to all forms of suffering. At bottom, our nonchalance at the notion of our non-existence prior to birth should console us as to our inevitable non-existence after death, for both are, as I mentioned, essentially one and the same. Hence,

> "[…] I can then console myself for the infinite time after my death when I shall not exist, with the infinite time when I did not as yet exist, as a quite customary and really comfortable state. For the infinity *a parte post* without me cannot be any more fearful than the infinity *a parte ante* without me, since the two are not distinguished by anything except by the intervention of an ephemeral life-dream […] [To] mourn for the time when we shall no longer exist is just as absurd as it would be to mourn for the time when we did not as yet exist; for it is all the same whether the time our existence does not fill is related to that which it does fill as future or as past." (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 467).

The next consolation pertains to the rapidity with which consciousness is lost just prior to death. Schopenhauer (1969b: 468) correctly notes that "[…] for the *subject*, death itself consists merely in the moment when consciousness vanishes, since the activity of the brain ceases. The extension of the stoppage to all the other parts of the organism which follows this is really already an event after death. *Therefore, in a subjective respect, death concerns only consciousness*". In other words, for an individual in the process of dying the only event of concern is the moment one loses consciousness, for it alone illuminates the world and renders it experienceable. Rational reflection consequently teaches us that from a subjective perspective death is really an *instantaneous event* in so far as it entails the loss of consciousness which occurs as rapidly as the speed of light. Here we must observe that in order for one to experience an event consciousness is a prerequisite thereof, i.e. without awareness one cannot be said to experience anything. Hence, death cannot be considered an evil, "for every evil,

[187] I wish to note that all Schopenhauer's (1969b: 466-470) cogent consolations afforded by reason concerning the inevitability of death arise, as I see it, from an earnest consideration of the relation between consciousness and experienceability.

like every good, presupposes existence, indeed even consciousness" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 467).

I reiterate that at the moment of death the transition into a state of unconsciousness occurs so rapidly that it cannot even be said to be experienceable as an event in life, let alone one of immense suffering. Any individual who has experienced the rapidity with which consciousness is lost upon falling asleep, fainting (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273) or being administered a general anaesthetic can attest to this consoling fact; as Schopenhauer (1969b: 468) states:

> "Now from going to sleep everyone can, to some extent, judge what the vanishing of consciousness may be; and whoever has had a real fainting fit knows it even better. The transition here is not so gradual, nor is it brought about by dreams; but first of all, while we are still fully conscious, the power of sight disappears, and then immediately supervenes the deepest unconsciousness."

Indeed, if we consider Schopenhauer's (1969b: 468) notion that "death itself consists merely in the moment when consciousness vanishes" to be veracious, then we must acknowledge that the moment of death coincides with the loss of consciousness and is consequently not something experienceable, i.e. following Epicurus (quoted in Schopenhauer, 1969b: 468), we can justifiably declare that "death does not concern us; [for] when we are, death is not, and when death is, we are not". Similarly, in connection with the aforementioned discussion, I may be permitted to invoke Wittgenstein's (1922: 88) famous words:

> "Death is not an event of life. Death is not lived through."

I reiterate that if we consider consciousness to be a prerequisite for the possibility of experiencing anything, we can, I think, comprehend Wittgenstein's meaning: the fact that consciousness is lost in the act of dying – a phenomenon which from the subjective standpoint occurs instantaneously – portends that death itself cannot be experienced. It is therefore, upon close consideration, erroneous to maintain that all will experience the phenomenon of death; for although it is certain that all animate creatures will perish, reason reveals that none will actually experience the moment of death itself.

In this way reason intimates that we should not fear death as an evil; on the contrary, death "often appears even as a good thing, as something desired, as a friend" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 496). In order to comprehend how death, which is often considered the *summum malum*, is in fact a benevolent friend, we need only turn our attention to Schopenhauer's (1969b:469) pessimistic musings on the nature of life and the state of most individuals just prior to their death:

> "All who have encountered insuperable obstacles to their existence or to their efforts, who suffer from incurable disease or from inconsolable grief, have the return into the womb of nature as the last resource that is open to them as a matter of course. Like everything else, they emerged from this womb for a short time, enticed by the hope of more favourable conditions of existence than those that have fallen to their lot, and from this the same path always remains open to them."

The error of considering death as an evil often occurs as a result of a confounding of the state just prior to death with the instantaneous act of death itself (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 283). By this I mean, quite simply, that most individuals experience serious illness and tremendous suffering just prior to their passing. Now many unwittingly associate grave illnesses with the act of death itself, thereby confounding the phenomena and causing death itself to assume the form of an evil adversary. Yet, to reiterate an earlier observation, the rationally sagacious individual must bear in mind that the destruction of consciousness in death renders it impervious to experience – whether of a pleasant or unpleasant nature – hence, by releasing a tormented individual from the manifold psychological and physical agonies of existence, death may thus be considered a remedy for the sickness of life, i.e. as a kind friend who leads us out of our agonizing condition. Is it not in this sense that Socrates' last words were said by Plato (2007C: 92) to be:

> "Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius; will you remember to pay the debt?"[188]

Of course, the state of non-existence cannot be considered a positively experienceable good, but neither can it, upon rational reflection, be considered an evil. As

[188] A custom in ancient Greece was to give a cock to Asclepius (the ancient Greek god of Medicine) upon recovering from an illness. Thus, it appears that Socrates is saying that death is the antidote to the illness of life (cf. Nietzsche, 2003a: 39n1)

consciousness is extinguished in death, the phenomenon thereof is, as Epicurus (quoted in Schopenhauer, 1969b: 468) has it, essentially nothing to us – neither a good, nor a bad. But from the standpoint of ratiocination, the considerations here presented in this way transform the *summum malum* into the *summum bonum*, liberating one from the suffering of life.[189] Let us now turn to an earnest consideration of Schopenhauer's *metaphysical consolation* for the inevitability of death, which he (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 463) considers to be the most tranquilising.

6.4. Schopenhauer's Theory of Immortality

Although the aforementioned reflections can and do console one regarding the inevitability of death, Schopenhauer (1969b: 463) maintains that only a metaphysical doctrine which teaches a continued existence of sorts after the demise of one's physical form can truly console one plagued by the certainty of death. However, Schopenhauer (1969b: 464) maintains that Western individuals tend to oscillate between two equally erroneous views: on the one hand, there exists the bizarre doctrine that one shall continue to exist after death with all one's physical attributes, i.e. "with skin and hair" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 464); whereas, on the other hand, there is the materialistic view that death is an absolute annihilation which inevitably leads to the "bestial" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 464) conclusion expressed in the dictum "*edite, bibite, post mortem nulla voluptas*".[190] Both these views are anathema to Schopenhauer's sensibilities and he consequently attempts to propound an alternative metaphysical view.

Now Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia ultimately depends, as Cartwright (2005: 39) notes, on the "metaphysics of the Will". But in addition thereto it is also greatly indebted to "Kant's greatest merit" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 417), viz., the

[189] However, according to Schopenhauer's (1974b: 296) philosophy the liberation by death is merely illusory; for as will become conspicuous Schopenhauer (1974b: 278) maintains that the Will is impervious to destruction by ordinary death and hence it is able to re-manifest itself, thereby continuing the tragedy of existence.

[190] "Eat and drink, after death there is no more rejoicing" (Payne's translation).

dichotomisation between the Will as *Ding-an-sich* on the one hand, and the world of appearances, on the other. Ultimately, Schopenhauer (1974b: 269-270) wishes to argue that the phenomenon of death belongs solely to the phenomenal world, and not to the Will as *Ding-an-sich*.

Let us commence this discussion by observing the situation from the former standpoint, i.e. the world of appearance subjected to the four forms of the principle of sufficient reason. From this perspective we behold a temporal and spatial world in perpetual flux and transformation: here the *principium fiendi*[191] and the *principium essendi*[192] rule and thus ensure that the forms are individuated and constantly change; in other words, as a particular phenomenon "everyone is transitory" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 282). Thus, one witnesses the birth of an individual, followed by an ephemeral, and often tragic, life, which subsequently sinks into the desolation of oblivion. As Schopenhauer (1969a: 275) states:

> "Birth and death belong equally to life, and hold the balance as mutual conditions of each other, or, if the expression be preferred, as poles of the whole phenomenon of life."

From this perspective we may be led to the view that an individual arises at birth *ex nihilo*[193] and returns thereto upon dying (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 275). Indeed, this is the view most championed by our modern materialistic world. But if one were to subject the notion to a rigorous scrutiny one shall discern its ultimate inaccuracy. For the notion that something may arise out of nothing is, in the last analysis, utterly inconceivable to the human mind. For this reason the ancients rightly declared: *Ex nihilo nihil fit, et in nihilum nihil potest reverti* (quoted in Schopenhauer, 1969b: 487).[194] The notion of something arising out of nothing is to philosophy what the now debunked concept of abiogenesis (spontaneous generation) was to biology. I may, therefore, be permitted to use the expression of "spontaneous creation" as an expression of the notion of something arising out of nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*). Now, even though biology has

[191] "The principle of sufficient reason of becoming", i.e. mechanical causation.

[192] "The principle of sufficient reason of being", i.e. time and space.

[193] "Out of nothing".

[194] "Nothing comes out of nothing, and nothing can again become nothing" (Payne's translation).

been purged of the concept, we still find, at the present day, a unique form of this bizarre doctrine being propounded in cosmology. I am thinking in particular of the difficulty faced by modern cosmologists in attempting to explicate what came before the so-called "big bang". Due to the fact that our scientific laws may not be applicable to whatever brought the big bang into existence (Hawking, 2016: 55)[195] it seems convenient, from the scientific standpoint, to argue that the creation of our universe was an act of spontaneous creation, i.e. *creatio ex nihilo*. Yet this seems to me to be an utterly meaningless response, for, as mentioned, the creation of something out of nothing is inconceivable to a rational mind. In my opinion such an explanation stands *in lieu* of the more honest admission of ignorance, i.e. a cosmologist ought rather to admit that the origins of the big bang are insoluble by the scientific method and they ought to take Wittgenstein's (1922: 90) closing statement in the *Tractatus sensu proprio*:[196]

> "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent."

But let us, for the sake of argument, entertain the doctrine of the universe arising *ex nihilo*. One need only attempt to imagine the situation in order for its absurdity to be brought to the fore: from an empty void or vacuum – not itself located within time or space, therefore, technically speaking, not really anything – elementary particles suddenly burst forth, i.e. by an act of spontaneous creation, thereby forming the universe. Absolutely everything we experience from – nothing! It is an affront to every logical mind to hear that the universe spontaneously created itself out of empty nothingness; even more so than the notion of a worm or a fly spontaneously generating itself in putrefying flesh or waste.[197] I think that such theories corroborate my view of the ignorance with which we humans must necessarily live our lives: we find ourselves on a lonely planet inhabited by certain forms of life, floating aimlessly in the vast expanse of space, and yet surrounded by what appears to be a lifeless ocean in all directions: in truth, we know not how we, our planet, our Moon, our Sun, our solar

[195] "As far as we are concerned, events before the big bang can have no consequences, so they should not form part of a scientific model of the universe. We should therefore cut them out of the model and say that time had a beginning at the big bang" (Hawking, 2016: 55).

[196] "Literally".

[197] For not even in the case of biological spontaneous generation are creatures said to appear out of thin air; but out of some substance such as putrefying flesh, etc.

system, our galaxy or even our universe itself came to be. At best we can formulate conjectures which appear to accord with our observations and which we subsequently term "theories"; but we can never be entirely certain of anything: *ignoramus et ignorabimus*.[198] However, for a theory to be plausible it must, at the very least, be comprehensible and yet, as mentioned, I simply cannot fathom the creation of something – indeed, absolutely everything – out of nothing.

It may be argued in response, of course, that the finite human mind is incapable of comprehending the universe in its entirely: perhaps, then, elementary particles *can* spontaneously create, in spite of humankind's inability to fathom such an occurrence. But, even if this seemingly absurd fact does indeed accord with reality, the scientific method demands that such an event be proved by way of experimentation; for until then it remains mere conjecture. I therefore propose that until scientists can unequivocally show by way of experimentation such elementary particles spontaneously creating themselves from a true vacuum, we cast such theories aside and approach all *creatio ex nihilo* theories *cum grano salis*.[199] I have discussed this matter at length in order to convince and illustrate to readers the untenability of attempting to argue that something can arise out of nothing.

Now, to Schopenhauer's (1974b: 270-271) mind, the notion that a creature's existence commences with birth is an absurdity; for it tacitly assumes that existence can arise *ex nihilo*. However, I take the aforementioned discussion to have illustrated the absurdity – and consequently, the untenability – of such a view. Hence I maintain that, along with Schopenhauer (1969b: 487), I can confidently assert the dictum: *ex nihilo nihil fit, et in*

[198] "We do not know and we shall not know".

[199] But philosophy affords us a further indictment of the aforementioned view in the form of the cosmological argument for God's existence. According thereto, God is the *prima causa* of the universe; therefore, nothing could have created God and so, therefore, God must be the cause of himself (*causa sui*). But the absurdity of the notion of something causing (i.e. creating) itself may be succinctly illustrated by conjuring up in the mind the image of a man giving birth – to himself! Therefore, one will not find a haven for the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* in the notion of *causa sui*.

nihilum nihil potest reverti.[200] The impossibility of something arising out of nothing is extremely significant to the development of Schopenhauer's argument for immortality, for it intimates that a creature must have existed in some sense prior to its birth; thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 487) states: "everyone can think of himself as *immortal* only in so far as he thinks of himself as *unborn*".

This necessarily leads to the question as to what could possibly have existed prior to one's conception. The solution, as with everything in Schopenhauer's philosophy, is to be found in the notion of the metaphysical Will (Cartwright, 2005: 39). However, it is important to bear in mind that radical idealism is equally as essential to Schopenhauer's theory of immortality; for as will become evident in due course Schopenhauer (1974b: 270) wishes to argue that the phenomenon of death belongs uniquely to the phenomenal world and not to the world as it is in-itself. It will be recalled that in the second section of the first part of my exposition I argued that the metaphysical Will possesses three attributes, or rather the lack thereof, in contradistinction to objects found in the phenomenal world. I indicated that due to the fact that time, space (the *principium individuationis*, which emanates from the *principium essendi*) and causality (which emanates from the *principium fiendi*) are essentially *mind-dependent* they pertain solely to the phenomenal world, i.e. the experienceable world of appearances. As a consequence thereof, the world as it is in-itself, i.e. independent of all cognition must be aspatial, atemporal and acausal. We can express this positively by saying that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is a unity, eternal and unchanging. For the sake of Schopenhauer's theory of immortality, the two most significant attributes of the *Ding-an-sich* are its atemporality and its acausality. Although I already discussed these three concepts in the course of my discussion on Schopenhauer's attempted identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich*, I shall reiterate them here for the sake of thoroughness.

[200] "Nothing comes out of nothing, and nothing can again become nothing" (Payne's translation).

6.4.1. The Will as Eternal

Given that time emanates from the mind it cannot be a feature of the Will as it is in-itself (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 120); thus is the Will as *Ding-an-sich* said by Schopenhauer (1969a: 176) to be *eternal*. But it is important to note that here eternity is not to be construed as an *endless duration*, which inadvertently presupposes the notion of time, but, rather, as a *timelessness*. Consequently, the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is eternal only in so far as it is not located within time, for the attempted application of temporal concepts thereto is utterly meaningless. In this sense the Will has no beginning and no end (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 278); rather, it is that which perpetually exists (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 279). Thus Schopenhauer (1974b: 276) states:

> "[…] however much the plays and masks may change on the world's stage, the actors in all of them nevertheless remain the same. We sit together, talk, and excite one another; eyes gleam and voices grow louder. Thousands of years ago, *others* sat in just the same way; it was the same and they were the *same*. It will be just the same thousands of years hence. The contrivance that prevents us from becoming aware of this is *time*."

Now the atemporality of the Will has a peculiar counterpart in the phenomenal world, viz., it perpetually manifests itself in the present moment (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 279). Schopenhauer (1969a: 279) therefore refers to this perpetual present as "the *nunc stans*", which he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 279) acquires by way of scholastic philosophy. Not being subject to time, the Will remains impervious to its pernicious influence and consequently the abstract "concepts of past and future" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 1974) do not apply to it; "hence the present is the essential form of the phenomenon of the Will, and is inseparable from that form". Consequently, if it were possible for one to assume the standpoint of the metaphysical Will he would behold an extended present moment wherein superfluous and superficial appearances perpetually transform; akin to the actor who "stand firm and is, therefore, always the same" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 271), but assumes new costumes and personas for different theatrical roles.

6.4.2. The Will as Unalterable

Besides being atemporal, it will be recalled that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is also said by Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) to be impervious to the pernicious influence of the *principium fiendi*, i.e. the law of causation. This portends that the metaphysical Will is not subject to alteration, i.e., it is unchanging. If, in contrast thereto, we compare the situation of phenomenal objects we find that they are in a constant state of transformation: the individual, for instance, is in a perpetual process of aging which we can discern in the three primary phases of human life, viz., youth, adulthood and old age. But the metaphysical Will does not, like its phenomenal manifestations, grow old and decrepit for, as mentioned, it is impervious to the influence of causality. Thus, the Will which will manifest itself in an object a thousand years from now is identical to the Will which manifested itself in an object a thousand years ago (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 276). In this way there exists an identification between every extant and deceased creature; for the Will which exists in all is indefatigable and unalterable; thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 482) states:

> "I know quite well that anyone would regard me as mad if I seriously assured him that the cat, playing just now in the yard, is still the same one that did the same jumps and tricks there three hundred years ago; but I also know that it is much more absurd to believe that the cat of today is through and through and fundamentally an entirely different one from the cat of three hundred years ago."[201]

Although I do not wish to anticipate one of my most significant criticisms of Schopenhauer's theory, due to the complexity of the matter I wish here to observe a serious complication generated by the supposed acausality of the metaphysical Will for Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine. In my discussion on Schopenhauer's notorious pessimism, I observed that the solution to the problem of life for Schopenhauer (1969a: 412) is the dissolution of the metaphysical Will in oneself; only in this sense is one's

[201] Incidentally, Schopenhauer was in the habit of naming his succession of pet poodles by the same name, viz., "Atma" (which means "world-soul" in Sanskrit) (Cartwright, 2005: 136) – no doubt this was due in part to his theory of the indestructibility of the metaphysical Will and its perpetual re-manifestation in the phenomenal world.

existence truly at an end. Indeed, because the metaphysical Will is insusceptible to a positive transformation by way of non-ascetic suicide, it is rejected by Schopenhauer (1969a: 398) as a genuine solution to the predicament of life, for non-ascetic suicide affects solely the phenomenal appearance and not the Will as *Ding-an-sich* (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 399). Now in order for the metaphysical Will to be susceptible to ascetic practices it simply *cannot* be impervious to the influence of causation; on the contrary, I argue that the phenomenally-bound ascetic practices must be capable of a *direct* causal interaction with the Will as *Ding-an-sich*. Therefore, it seems to me that an argument against Schopenhauer's claim for the acausality (and thus, the unalterability) of the metaphysical Will is to be found in his soteriological doctrine; in connection therewith, I refer the reader to the appendix.

6.4.3. The Will as a Unity

It will also be recalled that given that the metaphysical Will is not subject to the *principium individuationis* (in particular, space) it is not to be conceived of as a plurality (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 113). This is significant in so far as it intimates that immortality is not, in contradistinction to religious and many other philosophical (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 495) notions thereof, a personal matter. In other words, because the unified Will constitutes the essence of every extant creature, the immortal aspect of all is essentially identical and not individual;[202] whereas "all philosophers [before Schopenhauer] have made the mistake of placing that which is metaphysical, indestructible, and eternal in man in the *intellect*" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 495), which is, by its very nature, separate and distinct to every individual.

In his beautiful discussion on athanasia in the second volume of *Parerga und Paralipomena* Schopenhauer (1974b: 281) maintains that what is uniquely individual

[202] In the second section of the first part of my exposition I mentioned that the notion of a unified Will has serious implications for Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine, for it intimates that the abrogation of the Will in one organism will necessary lead to the dissolution of the Will *in toto* (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 129). In the appendix I address and attempt to resolve this complicated matter.

is in fact an illusion, for it belongs to the phenomenal appearance of the manifested metaphysical Will. As such, the dissolution of one's individuality at the moment of death is not in fact to be feared, for it is something adventitious and does not constitute one's innermost essence. Although this notion is extremely alluring, I must, however, observe a serious inconsistency inherent to this view generated by Schopenhauer's (2005: 82) invocation of the so-called "intelligible character", which he acquired by way of Kant.

Let us commence this discussion by observing that for Schopenhauer (2005: 51) the human character is fixed and unalterable – "it remains the same throughout the whole of life". Schopenhauer (2005: 52) claims that:

> "A confirmation of this truth can be gathered from everyday experience. But one encounters it in the most striking manner when after twenty or thirty years one meets an acquaintance again and soon catches him doing the same silly things as formerly."

Indeed, many individuals unwittingly assume the veracity of this notion when, for instance, upon "[f]inding a man dishonest once, he never trusts him again", whereas, on the contrary, "he readily relies on the one who has proved himself honest in the past" (Schopenhauer, 2005: 52). Furthermore, Schopenhauer (2005: 52) observes that when an individual behaves contrary to the way in which one expects him to behave one "never says: 'His character has changed', but 'I was mistaken about him'"; intimating, of course, that the human character is static and unalterable. Now although these pronouncements may accord with the way in which most human beings construe the matter of personality, i.e., as something unalterable, it in no way proves the veracity thereof. In contradistinction thereto I may be permitted to observe here that in my estimation the human character can and does undergo various alterations throughout the course of one's life. In order to illustrate the matter most convincingly, I note that damage to the brain by way of disease, intoxication or injury can result in serious personality changes.[203] I think that any reticent individual who has ever ingested

[203] One striking instance of this phenomenon is so be found in the case of Chris Birch. Birch (cited in Wilkinson, 2017) claims that he initially identified as a heterosexual man, but that after sustaining a serious stroke (which, of course, must be assumed to have physiologically altered the structure of his brain) he subsequently assumed a homosexual orientation.

alcohol can attest to the way in which the substance causes one to become less inhibited and thus act contrary to one's usual character. The significance of this observation intimates that one's personality is entirely dependent upon the brain; consequently, if that organ undergoes a certain permanent physiological alteration, it is to be expected that the personality will likewise be transformed accordingly in some significant respect. But I note that in the course of his discussion on the inalterability of the human character Schopenhauer (2005: 51-54) does not discuss this significant fact and he (Schopenhauer, 2005: 51) consequently insists upon the constancy of the human character.

However, such a view is at variance with the fact that Schopenhauer (1889a: 169-170) is also a determinist – correctly maintaining that all objects, including humans, are subject to the causal law. As Schopenhauer (2005: 46) states:

> "For man, like all objects of experience, is a phenomenon in time and space, and since the law of causality holds for all such *a priori* and consequently without exception, he too must be subject to it."

As such, it would seem that the human character, like everything else in the phenomenal world, ought to be subject to the *principium fiendi* and thus alterable. However, the desire to construe the human character as unalterable leads Schopenhauer (2005: 82), as mentioned, to the acceptance of the Kantian dichotomisation between the intelligible and the empirical characters. The intelligible character is essentially the "noumenal form" of the character, not bound by the principle of sufficient reason, i.e. the *principium individuationis* and causality (Schopenhauer, 2005: 82); whereas the empirical character is, as its name suggests, the character known through experience (Schopenhauer, 2005: 49), i.e. the phenomenal manifestation of the so-called intelligible character.[204] Now, that the genuine character, i.e., the intelligible character, is impervious to the principle of sufficient reason intimates that it is static and unalterable throughout the course of one's life (Schopenhauer, 2005: 51).

[204] Schopenhauer (2005: 51) also postulates a so-called "acquired character", which is essentially knowledge of one's own empirical character which one is said to *acquire* by way of living.

However, it is important to realise that the postulation of an unalterable human character generates profound complications within Schopenhauer's system. For if the intelligible character is not bound to the principle of sufficient reason then it must necessarily belong to the world as it is in-itself. However, it will be recalled that the *Ding-an-sich* is said to be a unity and therefore the possibility of multitudinous characters existing within that realm is precluded. Schopenhauer (1969a: 224) therefore sagaciously avoids the contradiction of identifying the intelligible character with the Will as *Ding-an-sich* by arguing that every human character corresponds to a unique Platonic Idea.[205] Although this appears to resolve the difficulty – locating the intelligible character somewhere in between that of the world as it is in-itself and its manifestation, i.e. the phenomenal world – the postulation of the Platonic Ideas generates, as is known, profound complications for Schopenhauer's system. As I argued, the Platonic Ideas actually constitute a *third force*, for they are neither fully akin to the Will as *Ding-an-sich* and nor are they entirely identical with phenomenal objects. In the last analysis, however, they are a superfluous and unnecessary element within Schopenhauer's system and I therefore maintain that it is best to jettison them altogether.[206; 207]

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[205] "[…] each person exhibits to a certain extent [a Platonic] Idea that is wholly characteristic of him" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 224).

[206] It is to be noted that the Platonic Ideas also play a role in Schopenhauer's (1969b: 483-485) theory of immortality. It will be recalled that I previously identified the Platonic Idea as a prototype or blueprint for all phenomenal manifestations; thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 483) maintains that by following the particular Idea of each species the Will is able to manifest instantiations of particular creatures *ad infinitum*. The view is evidently non-Darwinian in so far as it maintains the immutability of particular species by assigning an eternal prototypical Idea to every extant and extinct species. Furthermore, the Platonic Idea, unlike its particular instantiation, is immortal in so far as it is said to be impervious to the influence of time and causality (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 483). However, due to the fact that I take the Platonic Ideas to be a superfluous postulation within Schopenhauer's system I do not believe that a consideration of them is able to offer much consolation for the inevitability of death.

[207] Moreover, I must acknowledge that if one were to obstinately and absurdly retain the concept of a unique Platonic Idea corresponding to every individual human existence (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 224), which, in the last analysis, must be considered identical to the so-called

Now if one were to reject the Platonic Ideas it follows that there would no longer exist an abode for the intelligible character for, as mentioned, it cannot be equated with the Will as *Ding-an-sich* which is said by Schopenhauer (1969a: 113) to be a unity. One would then be compelled to reject the notion of the intelligible character altogether and retain solely that of the empirical character. But then one would necessarily have to accept that given that the empirical character is entirely located within the phenomenal realm it is entirely subject to the laws which govern it; as such one would be coerced to accept the view that, contrary to Schopenhauer's (2005: 51) assertion, the human character, like all phenomenal entities, is subject to the *principium fiendi* and consequently alterable.

I observe that although this view is at variance with Schopenhauer's (2005: 51) understanding it actually accords perfectly with his (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 281) teaching that the individual character is an illusion, i.e. individuality, which all fear losing at the moment of death, is in fact not that which is essential. This is significant, because according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 495) what distinguishes him from all previous philosophical systems is his identification of the essence of man to be located in the impersonal Will, as opposed to the rational and individual soul. But if, as we have seen, one adheres to Schopenhauer's (2005: 51) view of the constancy of the individual character then one is coerced to postulate a transcendent form thereof, i.e. an indestructible Platonic Idea corresponding to the individual human character (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 224), even if it is unconscious,[208] thereby, perhaps unwittingly,

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"intelligible character" (Schopenhauer, 2005: 51), then one has unwittingly placed old wine in new bottles; for the concept of an indestructible, uniquely individual character is already found in many religious and spiritualist traditions; it is all one then whether we refer to this notion as the "soul" or the "intelligible character" or a "unique Platonic Idea". Yet the fact that for Schopenhauer (1974b: 273) consciousness, wherein the human character is inextricably bound, is akin to the physical brain necessarily rules out the possibility of it surviving the demise of the physical form; as such we are compelled to consider the concept of the intelligible character an untenable and unnecessary fiction within his system, a foreign notion culled from the Kantian philosophy and recklessly grafted onto the Schopenhauerian.

[208] Schopenhauer (1974b: 273-274) correctly observes that consciousness is dependent on the brain, which is ultimately a phenomenal object. Thus, "in death consciousness assuredly perishes" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273) and hence the indestructible Platonic Idea which is said

drawing Schopenhauer's theory of immortality into a closer association with Judaeo-Christian and Platonic (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 277) beliefs; intimating that there is in fact a postulated immortal individual character within Schopenhauer's theory.

On the contrary, my interpretation – by jettisoning the notion of the intelligible character – purifies Schopenhauer's theory of all erroneous Platonic and Judaeo-Christian influences. What remains upon my view is the empirical character which, like all phenomenal objects is bound to the principle of sufficient reason and is consequently subject to alteration and ultimately destruction in death. Thus, on my view, nothing personal or individual survives the demise of one's physical form and this, I observe, accords immaculately with Schopenhauer's (1974b: 278) characterisation of the matter.

6.5. The Doctrine of *Palingenesis*

The above considerations necessarily lead to the conclusion that the metaphysical Will is the indestructible element in all creatures; for unlike phenomenal manifestations thereof, the Will is neither subjected to the *principium individuationis* nor to the *principium fiendi* (the law of causality). Thus Schopenhauer (1974b: 270) states:

> "How can we imagine, on seeing the *death* of a human being, that here a thing-in-itself becomes *nothing*? On the contrary, that only a phenomenon comes to an end in time, this form of all phenomena, without the thing-in-itself being thereby affected, is the immediate intuitive knowledge of everyone."

It is evident, then, that the metaphysical Will exists prior to one's conception and that it shall persist after one's phenomenal demise. But if we pursue the matter to its logical conclusion then we shall come to realise that Schopenhauer's theory of immortality is actually a form of the Eastern religious concept of the so-called "transmigration of souls". However, in the case of Schopenhauer's philosophy what transmigrates is not, as in the Eastern religions, a conscious, individual soul but an "irrational and blind" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 466) metaphysical entity. This generates one particularly

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by Schopenhauer (1969a: 224) to act as a prototype of the unique human individuality must be construed as devoid of consciousness and thought.

significant distinction between the theory of transmigration in Eastern thought and within Schopenhauer's philosophical system.

Following Schopenhauer (1974b: 276-277), it will be convenient to distinguish between two forms of the concept of the "transmigration of souls". Schopenhauer (1974b: 276) observes that *metempsychosis* refers to "the transition of the entire so-called soul into another body"; whereas *palingenesis* intimates the continuation of a non-conscious substance, which, upon "assuming the shape of a new being, receives a new intellect" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 276). Now the intellect and consciousness are, for Schopenhauer (1969b: 205 & 466), entirely adventitious; consequently, they do not constitute the essence of a creature. Expressed somewhat differently, we may correctly say that the intellect and consciousness are, for Schopenhauer (1974b: 273-274), entirely a product of the phenomenal world. Thus Schopenhauer (1974b: 273) states:

> "For in death consciousness assuredly perishes, but certainly not that which had till then produced it. Thus consciousness rests primarily on the intellect, but this on a physiological process. For it is obviously the function of the brain and, therefore, conditioned by the co-operation of the nervous and vascular systems, more specifically by the brain that is nourished, animated and constantly agitated by the heart. It is through the ingenious and mysterious structure of the brain which anatomy describes but physiology does not understand, that the phenomenon of the objective world and the whole mechanism of our thoughts are brought about. An *individual consciousness* and thus a consciousness in general is not conceivable in an immaterial or incorporeal being, since the condition of every consciousness, knowledge, is necessarily a brain-function really because the intellect manifests itself objectively as brain."

Thus, when an individual dies his intellect and consciousness – given that they are entirely dependent on the brain (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273), which is a phenomenal entity – dissolve at the moment of death;[209] but the metaphysical Will – given that it is said to be atemporal (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 119-120 & 1969b: 496) and acausal (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100) – is indestructible and consequently it does not dissolve at

[209] It follows, therefore, that birth is the assuming of a particular consciousness, whereas death is the casting off thereof.

the moment of one's death.[210] Schopenhauer (1969b: 502) takes his theory of the indestructible, albeit unconscious, Will to be akin to the notion of *palingenesis*, referring to it as "more correct than *metempsychosis* for describing this [i.e. his] doctrine" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 502). Schopenhauer (1974b: 276) acknowledges *metempsychosis* to be the exoteric form of the transmigration of the souls, whereas *palingenesis* he (ibid.) considers as the esoteric form thereof. Thus, given that it is more comprehensible to the masses, it is understandable that *metempsychosis* is often accorded more attention by religion. However, *metempsychosis* must be considered erroneous in so far as it maintains the rebirth of a conscious and intellectual soul, whereas, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 466), that which endures and survives the demise of the physical form in order to re-manifest itself in the phenomenal world is the unconscious metaphysical Will.

It is ultimately from this process of life, death and re-birth *in saecula saeculorum*[211] that we find ourselves in existence at this present moment; for our essence, which we currently possess for but a brief moment in time, is indefatigable and indestructible; as such, it animated countless lives prior to our birth and it will – if we do not follow the path of asceticism and abrogate the portion of the Will which we currently possess (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 508) – re-manifest itself into countless other lives after our demise. Accordingly, we are deluded by the principle of sufficient reason into thinking that at every generation the world contains within it fundamentally *new* existences. In essence, the creatures which inhabit the world today are the manifestations of a Will which existed in countless previous generations, and which will, in turn, constitute the essence of countless future generations. In this sense, we may be compared to actors donning new costumes and personas, whereas, in essence, i.e. behind the façade, we are the same imperturbable and indefatigable beings. Birth is akin to putting on a new costume, death to casting it off. Hence, the costume, i.e. the individual existence, I don today will eventually be exchanged for another, as it has been innumerable times before.[212]

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[210] At least not at the moment of a non-ascetic death; cf. the appendix.

[211] "Unto the age of ages", expressing the notion of eternity.

[212] Until, at last, the Will manifests itself in an individual who says "from the bottom of his heart with regard to this game [of birth, death and rebirth]: 'I no longer like it'" (Schopenhauer,

Here, therefore, it is significant to note that Schopenhauer's theory of *palingenesis* does not commit him to the absurdity of maintaining that one's existence commences at birth and that it will end at death, or that after arising *ex nihilo* one will continue to exist "with skin and hair" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 464) for all eternity. In this regard, Schopenhauer (1969b: 488) actually considers Christianity to be the pinnacle of inconsistency and absurdity, for the Christian doctrine teaches that one is created *ex nihilo* and then is committed to either heaven or hell for all eternity, i.e. the teaching generates an asymmetry between the states prior to birth and after death. Such a doctrine defiles the truth, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 174 & 1974b: 273) sees it, for two reasons: firstly, it assumes the absurdity of a *creatio ex nihilo* and secondly, it maintains the continued existence of one's conscious individuality after death.[213] In contradistinction thereto, the incipient Jewish doctrine – although erroneous in so far as it, like Christianity maintains that one's existence commences at birth (or, more accurately, conception) and ends at death – Schopenhauer (1969b: 488) considers to be consistent in so far as it maintains that a nothingness stands on either side of existence, i.e. prior to birth and after one's death.[214] The Eastern religions – "Brahmanism and Buddhism" – however, espouse a consistent *and* a veracious doctrine in so far as they maintain that one will exist after death just as much as one existed prior to one's birth (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 488). Moreover, this profound insight accords immaculately with Schopenhauer's doctrine and is, likewise, applicable to all animate beings.

1969b: 479). Cf. the appendix in which I discuss at great length the abrogation of the Will in the resigned ascetic.

[213] It is interesting to note that modern science offers a similar inconsistent view of the universe: it was created *ex nihilo*, underwent a process of rapid inflation, and it now appears that it will continue to inflate *ad infinitum* (Hawking, 2016: 224). Thus, the universe, like the Christian view of immortality, arose from nothing and has an eternal existence.

[214] Schopenhauer (1974b: 357n1) bizarrely intimates that the absence of a doctrine of immortality in incipient Judaism may partly explicate why "the Jews were at all times and by all nations loathed and despised".

6.6. The Extension of Immortality to Non-Human Animals

In my estimation one of the greatest aspects of the Schopenhauerian theory is the fact that it extends immortality to non-human animals. In the second section of the first part of my exposition I presented three arguments as refuting solipsism, viz., the analogical, the practical egoist and the teleological arguments. These were meant to prove that all animate creatures are in fact phenomenal manifestations of the indefatigable and indestructible metaphysical Will. As such, the Schopenhauerian theory of athanasia applies equally to non-human animals as it does to the human-animal. Thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 482) states:

> "We shall have false notions about the indestructibility of our true nature through death, so long as we do not make up our minds to study it first of all in the animals, and claim for ourselves alone a class apart from them under the boastful name of immortality. But it is this presumption alone and the narrowness of view from which it proceeds, on account of which most people struggle so obstinately against recognizing the obvious truth that, essentially and in the main, we are the same as animals; in fact that such people recoil at every hint of our relationship with these. Yet it is this denial of the truth which, more than anything else, bars to them the way to real knowledge of the indestructibility of our true nature."

Firstly, then, one needs to comprehend, as mentioned, that due to the fact that the metaphysical Will is the underlying reality of all phenomenal objects it is as indestructible in non-human creatures as it is in human organisms. Thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 476) states:

> "If I kill an animal, be it a dog, a bird, a frog, or even only an insect, it is really inconceivable that this being, or rather the primary and original force by virtue of which such a marvellous phenomenon displayed itself only a moment before in its full energy and love of life, could through my wicked or thoughtless act have become nothing. Again, on the other hand, the millions of animals of every kind which come into existence at every moment in endless variety, full of force and drive, can never have been absolutely nothing before the act of their generation, and can never have arrived from nothing to an absolute beginning."

It is therefore evident that non-human animals possess the indestructible Will in equal proportion to human-animals. Therefore, they are every bit as immortal as are their human counterparts. Now if we attend closely to this notion we shall inevitably come to the realisation – congenial to some and horrifying to others – that the metaphysical Will which animates one's phenomenal form at present might re-manifest itself in non-human organisms in countless other phenomenal lives; or that, conversely, the Will which presently animates one's body might have existed in the previous life or lives as, for instance, a seemingly insignificant insect! Thus, in this life one happens to be a human being, but perhaps in the next life one will be a dog, an ant, an elephant or even a plant of some sort; just as one may have been any of these creatures in previous lives. To quote the poetic words on the transmigration of souls from the *Katha Upanishad* (translated by Juan Mascaró, 1978: 64):

> "The soul may go to the womb of a mother and thus obtain a new body. It even may go into trees or plants […]."

But here I must acknowledge a significant distinction between the concept of the transmigration of one's essential being in the Eastern religious sense and according to the Schopenhauerian view thereof. The Eastern religions maintain that moral behaviour ensures that one's soul (*jiva*) will ascend the moral hierarchy and thus be reborn into a more fortunate existence (cf. Mascaró, 1978: 57-58); thus, a righteous individual in this life will be reborn as a more fortunate creature in the next life, until he finally attains the human form and achieves *Moksha* from the perpetual cycle of *Samsara*.[215] In

[215] As liberation from the cycle of *Samsara* requires abstract knowledge (which, arguably only humans possess, cf. Schopenhauer, 1889a: 114) it would appear that a righteous creature would have to be reborn into a human form just prior to attaining *Moksha*; but if, in contrast, a human were to behave wickedly he would have to be reborn into a tormented existence. This, however, need not be a non-human animal existence, for some non-human animals are capable of living peaceful lives; whereas many humans live with a tremendous amount of suffering. It is therefore possible that a wicked individual could be reborn into such a troubled human existence in his next life. I mention this because one should avoid adopting an ascensional evolutionary view in connection with the transmigration of souls, i.e. one should avoid erroneously maintaining that once the human form has been attained one cannot descend or regress to a non-human stage. However, as mentioned, the human form is a necessary prerequisite for attaining *Moksha*, i.e. liberation from the cycle of *Samsara*.

contradistinction thereto, the evil individual will be reborn into a less fortunate form in order to purify the soul of the negative *Karma* it has accumulated in its previous life or lives. In contrast to this Indian view of the transmigration of souls, there is no cogent reason for postulating a moral hierarchy within the Schopenhauerian system. Thus, it is possible that, for instance, the metaphysical Will which manifested itself in Adolf Hitler's being could have re-manifested itself in the being of an entirely contented individual: one who is destined to live a long, prosperous and pleasant life. In other words, the Schopenhauerian theory of the transmigration of the metaphysical Will does not postulate a *moral connection between* one's numerous lives, as does the Indian doctrine.[216] According to Schopenhauer's theory, it is therefore possible for the Will of a genuinely benevolent human being to be re-manifested into an utterly tormented existence in the next life, just as it is possible for the Will of a malicious individual to be re-manifested into a thoroughly congenial existence. This may appear to be a rather bleak and depressing view, for it intimates that no matter how we behave in this life, we cannot positively influence the next. However, this is true only in a limited sense, for the sagacious individual is one who apprehends the essential metaphysical unity of all extant creatures: he thus comes to see himself in everything which lives – which is beautifully expressed by the Indian expression, "*tat tvam asi*"[217] (Mascaró, 1978: 64, 117-118), which Schopenhauer (1969a: 220, 355) is fond of quoting – and he consequently treats all living creatures with a care and respect which the egoist ordinarily reserves solely for himself. Now my maverick interpretation of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine maintains that the thwarting of one's desires (which is akin to behaving morally) causes a reduction in the potency of one's phenomenal volitions which corresponds to a contraction in the metaphysical Will.

[216] However, I wish to observe that my interpretation of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine (cf. the appendix herein) intimates that egoistical and malicious actions within the phenomenal world cause a corresponding augmentation in the metaphysical Will; thereby increasing the amount of suffering in the world. In this sense my interpretation indicates that there is in fact a moral connection between one's phenomenal actions and the metaphysical essence; but it is not one in which one's particular essence will be made to suffer in proceeding lives for the evil deeds perpetrated within one's present life.

[217] "Thou art that", expressing the metaphysical unity of all creatures.

Thus, in a sense, moral behaviour does indeed have metaphysical implications, but this is not a personal or individual boon as such, but one undertaken for the greater-good.

But to return to the primary matter: I consider Schopenhauer's (1969b: 476) inclusion of non-human animals into his theory of immortality to be extremely sagacious, for it is ludicrous to consider humankind as superior thereto merely due to the former's greater capacity for ratiocination. At bottom, the human brain is, as Schopenhauer (1974b: 273-274) correctly observes, "[a] cerebral animal consciousness, one that is somewhat more highly developed, animal in so far as we have it essentially in common with the whole animal kingdom, although in us it reaches its summit". What reason then does a philosopher or a religionist have, besides callow prejudice (i.e. speciesism), for excluding a non-human animal from the possibility of immortality? I can find absolutely none, of course.

In connection with the immortality of non-human animals, one should note Schopenhauer's (2005: 112 & 1969b: 476) negative assessment of Descartes' view that non-human animals do not possess "intelligent souls" (Bracken, 2002: 112-113) and are consequently not immortal, like their human counterparts. In fact, Schopenhauer (2005: 112) explicitly invokes the practical egoist argument, discussed at length in a previous section, as proof of the fact "that the truly essential and fundamental part in man and beast is identically the same thing" (Schopenhauer, 2005: 113). Hence, it follows that for Schopenhauer (1969b: 476) the non-human animal is every bit as immortal as its human-animal counterpart; consequently, when a dog, for instance, dies her[218] essence endures and thus re-manifests itself as another creature in the phenomenal world.

As a consequence of this inclusion of non-human animals into his theory of immortality, one would expect Schopenhauer to argue in favour of a vegetarian lifestyle at the very least, for the essence in the creatures one consumes may have been the same essence which animated one's deceased relatives.[219] Surprisingly, however, he

[218] I intentionally refrain from using the word "it", which unwittingly implies that a non-human animal is a mere inanimate object (Schopenhauer, 2005: 112).

[219] Although, given that the indestructible metaphysical Will can also manifest itself into a "tree or a plant" (Mascaró, 1978: 64), it is possible that one could inadvertently consume the essence of one's relatives while eating fruit and vegetables. The logical conclusion therefore seems that

(Schopenhauer, 2005: 116) does not do this, instead Schopenhauer (1974b: 159) claims that humans, in particular white Northern Europeans, require animal flesh in order to survive the harsh, cold, Northern climate. Thus Schopenhauer (2005: 116-117) states that:

> "[…] compassion for sentient beings is not to carry us to the length of abstaining from flesh, like the Brahmans. This is because, by a natural law, capacity for pain keeps pace with the intelligence; consequently men, by going without animal food, especially in the North, would suffer more than beasts do through a quick death, which is always unforeseen; although the latter ought to be made still easier by means of chloroform. Indeed, without meat nourishment mankind would be quite unable to withstand the rigours of the Northern climate."

This argument in defence of the consumption of animal flesh propounded by Schopenhauer seems to me to be erroneous for it invokes a phenomenal, and therefore illusory, distinction between that of "man and beast", viz., that of the greater capacity for suffering generated by the rational intellect (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273). But in order to cogently refute Schopenhauer's argument we must first recall two significant facts, viz., (i) that the *fuga mortis*[220] emanates from the *Wille-zum-Leben* (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 465), which ultimately constitutes the essence of all living organisms (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 245), and (ii) that the intellect is said by Schopenhauer (1969b: 466) to be adventitious. Thus, the simplest response to Schopenhauer is that regardless as to the intellectual capabilities of each creature and the idiosyncratic capacity for suffering attached thereto, all creatures are a manifestation of the metaphysical Will and thus all must *fear* death equally and ought, as a consequence thereof, to be treated with compassion. "*Tat tvam asi"* – "this living thing art thou" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 220).

But, for the sake of argument, I believe it is possible to refute Schopenhauer's assertion from a phenomenal consideration of the matter. For although humankind's possession

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one should shun food altogether; this is interesting for it accords with the way in which I argue that the metaphysical Will can be entirely abrogated, viz., by way of a voluntary starvation unto death (cf. the appendix).

[220] "Fear of death".

of ratiocination makes possible the knowledge of past and future (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 60-61), and in this way the phenomena of regret and anxiety arise respectively which augment human suffering; it is not at all clear how the abstention from the consumption of animal flesh can augment such anthropoid agony in the modern era as Schopenhauer (2005: 116) intimates. In relation to prehistoric times Schopenhauer's argument is certainly applicable: for in the cold Northerly climate many vegetables and fruit cannot grow, certainly not during the frigid winter months; hence the consumption of animal flesh was essential to one's survival. But the suffering associated with the deprivation of nourishment does not seem to me to be characteristically human, and thus dependent on past and future knowledge; on the contrary, the agony associated with starvation is an entirely present-moment concern – the sole form of suffering accessible to non-human animals, by Schopenhauer's (1974b: 296) own admission. However, it is possible that the rational-human animal can develop an anxiety concerning the possibility of starvation, in which case the suffering associated therewith would extend beyond the present moment. However, in the modern world – wherein one can easily store, preserve and acquire non-animal food products – it seems to me that Schopenhauer's (2005: 116) argument is impertinent. Thus, the consumption of animal flesh in the modern, civilized world seems to me to be unconscionable.

As a further refutation of Schopenhauer's claim I observe that if non-human animals do not possess ratiocination they are, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 60-61) states, bound to the present moment and hence they cannot escape their immediate suffering. Although it may be true that most non-human animals do not possess the notion of the inevitability of death – which ultimately depends on inductive reasoning – it is evident, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 463) also acknowledges, that they do have a presentiment of death when it is dangerously immanent. Thus, it is simply false that non-human animals ignorantly walk to their deaths, i.e. without *suffering* any trepidation. I reiterate, that in our modern, civilized world – wherein non-animal nourishment can be easily acquired, preserved and stored – one simply cannot vindicate the subjection of an innocent creature to such unnecessary agony. It is only within the primitive state of nature that Schopenhauer's (2005: 116-117) abovementioned argument can be cogently defended. This, however, is not the only criticism I wish to level at Schopenhauer's philosophy, let us therefore turn to a more detailed consideration thereof; in particular in connection with his theory of athanasia.

6.7. Some Difficulties Pertaining to Schopenhauer's Theory of Athanasia

In the subsequent, i.e. second, part of my exposition I shall attempt to refute Schopenhauer's claim that the metaphysical Will is immortal by indicating that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3) radical idealism is erroneous and that the Will, contrary to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100, 126, 176, et al.) assertions, is not impervious to the *principium individuationis* and the *principium fiendi*. However, before I close this significant section I wish to observe a few difficulties pertaining specifically to Schopenhauer's theory of immortality.

6.7.1. A Multidimensional *Ding-an-sich*

In the second edition of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969b: 197) explicitly acknowledges that the Will is both located within time and that it presupposes the correlativity thesis – for in order for it to be known as such, it must be an object for a subject; hence it would appear that the equation of the *Ding-an-sich* with the Will is erroneous. As a consequence of that admission, Schopenhauer (1969b: 196) qualifies his original insight by claiming that:

> "[…] even the inward observation we have of our own Will still does not by any means furnish an exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself […] Accordingly, the act of Will is indeed only the nearest and clearest *phenomenon* of the thing-in-itself […]."

This necessarily intimates that the *Ding-an-sich* possesses other inscrutable dimensions, i.e. besides the Will; hence one may justifiably speak of a *multidimensional Ding-an-sich*. Such a view has implications for Schopenhauer's theory of immortality, for even if – as I shall attempt to argue in the subsequent section – the Will is indeed temporal, spatial and subject to the causal law, then it follows that the Will is *not* immortal; but that in-itself does not preclude, upon a multidimensional interpretation, the possibility of something unknown and mysterious surviving the demise of one's physical form. For if one were to take Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100, 126, 176, et al.) claims for the *a priority* of time, space and causality seriously then it follows that the world as it is in-itself, i.e. the underlying metaphysical essence – even if not the Will –

ought to be impervious to alteration and, hence, to destruction. However, this notion, like Kant's characterisation of the way the world is in-itself (Scruton, 2001: 55-56), can only be conceived of in a *negative* sense, i.e. "to designate the limit of our knowledge" and not positively, i.e. to designate and characterise the nature of immortality. Consequently, one can solely entertain immortality, upon a multidimensional view of the *Ding-an-sich*, as a *possibility*. It is important to note, therefore, that my criticism and ultimate rejection of the metaphysical Will does not entirely rule out the possibility of athanasia. However, owing to the transcendent nature of the matter I have not, and shall not, attempt to identify what could possibly survive the demise of one's physical form; for, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 198) correctly observes,

> "[…] the thing-in-itself […] may have, entirely outside all possible phenomenon, determinations, qualities, and modes of existence which for us are absolutely unknowable and incomprehensible […]."

6.7.2. The Will as the Origin of *Fuga Mortis*

A second, and more serious, difficulty arises with Schopenhauer's doctrine regarding the origins of the fear of death. It was discussed at length that although reason alerts one to the inevitability of death, the fear of death really resides, not in the intellect, but in the Will itself (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 498). This, however, is an odd occurrence, for how can that which is indestructible and immortal (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 278) be said to fear death, whereas that which is subject to decay and destruction be said to be impervious to the fear relating thereto (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 498)?[221] Here it is necessary to recall Schopenhauer's (1974b: 273) insistence on the intellect's phenomenality. As such, "in death consciousness [and consequently, the intellect] assuredly perishes" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273), whereas the metaphysical Will is said by Schopenhauer (1969b: 498) to be impervious to such destruction. However, I

[221] Indeed, Schopenhauer (1969b: 498) goes so far as to state that "[…] if man were a merely *knowing* being, death would necessarily be not only a matter of indifference, but even welcome to him". Yet it seems odd that the truly destructible should remain nonchalant in the face of death, whereas the immortal should fear it.

reiterate that this characterisation of the matter appears extremely odd to me: surely the *fuga mortis* should emanate from that which is, by its very nature, destructible, viz., the intellect, and not the indestructible metaphysical Will?

It seems that Schopenhauer (1969b: 498) was fully aware of this difficulty; thus, in the second edition of *Die Welt* he (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 498) addresses this predicament by arguing that the Will is deceived by the intellect into thinking that its existence will end along with the demise of the body:

> "Nevertheless, the Will in us fears death, and this is because knowledge presents to this Will its true nature merely in the individual phenomenon. From this there arises for the Will the illusion that it perishes with this phenomenon, just as when the mirror is smashed my image in it seems to be destroyed at the same time. Therefore this fills the Will with horror, because it is contrary to its original nature, which is a blind craving for existence."

In this way Schopenhauer (1969b: 498) attempts to resolve the conspicuous contradiction in arguing that the fear of death emanates from that which is, by its very nature, indestructible. However, does the argument not, yet again, presuppose the consciousness of the metaphysical Will, in contradistinction to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 115, 1969b: 466, et al.) repeated characterisation of the Will as "blind"? For in order for the Will to be deceived it would have to be capable of knowledge and awareness. It is evident, then, that Schopenhauer's (1969b: 498) claim that the *fuga mortis* emanates from the metaphysical Will generates a contradiction within his theory; however, his attempted solution of the problem inadvertently intimates the Will's consciousness and capacity for knowledge.

6.7.3. The Evil Metaphysical Will

Finally, one may justifiably question how consoling the Schopenhauerian doctrine of athanasia is if the metaphysical Will is essentially daemonic (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 349). It will be recalled that in the section on Schopenhauer's notorious pessimism I argued that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 146-147) characterisation of the phenomenal world as essentially one of perpetual suffering is inextricably bound to his metaphysical

theory (Janaway, 2008: 335). In other words, suffering exists due to the essential nature of the metaphysical Will; consequently, Schopenhauer's doctrine which maintains that upon dying one returns to the Will as *Ding-an-sich* intimates that one will ultimately return to the source of ultimate evil. Expressed thus, it seems that the doctrine cannot truly be considered consoling, but rather, harrowing (Young, 2005: 201-202).

However, in response to the abovementioned criticism I must observe that the Will only presents a harrowing spectacle in its *individuated* form, i.e. suffering appears solely when the Will manifests itself in the realm of appearances, it does not inhere in the metaphysical realm. For it is solely the Will at variance with itself (which intimates the *principium individuationis*) which reveals the Will's truly daemonic nature. Without the *a priori* forms of time and space the Will simply cannot produce the suffering spectacle so characteristic of the phenomenal world. Consequently, the reabsorption into the one metaphysical Will precludes the possibility of evil and suffering in so far as the *principium individuationis* does not exist therein. It is primarily for that reason that within the metaphysical realm the notions of strife and suffering lose all meaning.

Furthermore, it will be recalled that consciousness is a necessary element in the production of suffering. But the intellect is said by Schopenhauer (1969b: 466 & 1974b: 273) to be an entirely adventitious phenomenal entity, and thus, even if the *principium individuationis* did subsist in the metaphysical realm, the conflict generated by the Will at variance with itself would not be experienceable; consequently, it would ultimately be a superfluous matter.

As such, it is solely the phenomenally manifested and individuated Will, illuminated by consciousness which is dependent on the phenomenal brain (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273), which produces the spectacle of suffering. I therefore conclude that, although the metaphysical Will is the ultimate source of suffering (Janaway, 2008: 335), it is only extant in the phenomenal world as such and consequently, although death is a return to the metaphysical Will (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 270), it is not, as Young (2005: 202) intimates, to be feared or despised in so far as the phenomenon of suffering does not exist within that metaphysical realm. Let us now turn in earnest to a detailed criticism of the fundamental principles of Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia.

Part II: Criticisms Pertaining to Schopenhauer's Theory

In this second part of the dissertation I intend to illustrate the untenability of Schopenhauer's doctrine of athanasia by illustrating that the world must have a mind-independent existence to a certain extent and that the metaphysical Will is not indestructible in so far as it is subject to both the *principium individuationis* and the *principium fiendi*. To this end it is necessary to subject the two pillars upon which the edifice of Schopenhauer's system rests, viz., his radical idealism and the identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich*, to a painstaking scrutiny. Now as the identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich* presupposes radical idealism, I shall commence this critical section with a consideration thereof.

7. The World as Appearance: Part Two

To that end, I shall first critically examine Schopenhauer's five primary arguments I identified in the first section in favour of the radical idealist thesis; but I endeavour to go even farther in my insistence upon the absurdity of radical idealism by way of a consideration of three difficulties pertaining specifically thereto. These difficulties are so compelling that, even without a critical examination of Schopenhauer's specific arguments for radical idealism, I take them to be cogent reasons for the rejection thereof. In short, they are:

(i) The difficulty of the status of the mind within Schopenhauer's philosophy, i.e. whether the mind is a physical or a metaphysical entity.

(ii) The incompatibility of radical idealism with evolutionary theory; and

(iii) The incongruence between subjective and objective forms of time, space and causality.

However, let us commence this discussion with a critical examination of Schopenhauer's (1969b: 3-18) five primary arguments for radical idealism. It will be recalled that they are:

(i) The argument from immediacy
(ii) The argument from inconceivability
(iii) The argument from certainty
(iv) The argument from simplicity, and
(v) The argument from the subject-object antithesis

I shall now, in accordance with my presentation of these arguments in the earlier section of my exposition, critique each one individually.

7.1. The Argument from Immediacy

It will be recalled that the argument from immediacy maintains that "everything of which [one] has certain, sure, and hence immediate knowledge, lies within his consciousness. Beyond this consciousness, therefore, there can be no *immediate*

certainty […]" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 4). Now although it is true that one possesses immediate knowledge solely of the contents in one's mind, it simply does not follow therefrom that objects do not exist independently thereof; for, I observe that objects often present themselves in ways contrary to one's desires, thus intimating that they must necessarily have a mind-independent existence. For if objects truly emanated entirely from the mind and not some external source, then it seems to me that they should perpetually present themselves as congenial thereto. For the mind, it will be recalled, is said by Schopenhauer (1974b: 274) to be a product of the metaphysical Will. Consequently, the Will ought to present to itself agreeable scenes, and thus consciousness should be occupied solely with pleasant entities. On the contrary, however, one is often faced with extremely disagreeable, indeed harrowing, images, which intimates to me that the contents of one's consciousness must in fact have an external, i.e., mind-independent, source. Thus, the argument from immediacy, although in part veracious, does not truly prove that objects are entirely mind-dependent.

7.2. The Argument from Inconceivability

A tangible illustration of the so-called "argument from inconceivability" is that of attempting to picture one's funeral to oneself. For in the act of imagining the world devoid of oneself – i.e. the world without one's consciousness – one's act of imagining necessarily presupposes such a consciousness. In the same way, the argument of inconceivability maintains that it is impossible to imagine the world devoid of consciousness; for in the very act of imagining one has inadvertently presupposed that which one was attempting to exclude (Young, 2005: 26); as Schopenhauer (1969b: 5) states:

> "[…] if […] we attempt to imagine an objective world without a knowing subject, then we become aware that what we are imagining at that moment is in truth the opposite of what we intended, namely nothing but just the process in the intellect of a knowing being who perceives an objective world, that is to say, precisely that which we had sought to exclude."

However, the argument is, as Julian Young (2005: 27) notes, "little more than a sophism, a trick". It can easily be refuted by attending to the jargon with which it is

expressed: my idiosyncratic image of the world cannot exist without me, i.e. without my consciousness, but it does not follow that the objective world cannot exist independently of my consciousness. Thus, the distinction between an idiosyncratic (subjective) world on the one hand and an objective world on the other, ultimately reveals the argument to be fallacious.

7.3. The Argument from Certainty

That one ought to accept radical idealism in order to surmount Hume's scepticism does not seem to me to be an extremely compelling argument, which is precisely what the argument from certainty attempts to do (Janaway, 2002: 30). For although the postulation of time, space and causality as *a priori* features of the mind does indeed stamp them with a degree of certitude, it is questionable whether they really do emanate from the mind and are not objective features of the world as it is in-itself.

In connection with a possible refutation of this argument, however, I wish to reiterate a previous discussion. I have already argued that sensation, although defined by Schopenhauer (1889a: 60) as "[…] a process within the organism and […] limited, as such, to the region within the skin; […] cannot therefore contain anything which lies beyond that region, or, in other words, anything that is outside it", must in fact originate from an external source; for if all sensations were products of the brain it would be impossible to distinguish real sensations from hallucinatory ones. I therefore argued that in order to distinguish between hallucinatory sensations and real sensations it is necessary to posit the *Ding-an-sich* as *causing* the latter, while the former are hallucinations in so far as they originate entirely within the subject's brain and do not correspond to any externally real object. This necessarily leads to the conclusion that there must exist a mind-independent form of causality; for, I reiterate, the *Ding-an-sich* must *cause* real sensations "within the organism" (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 60). Thus, although radical idealism does remove scepticism regarding the causal law, that is not in-itself a sufficiently cogent reason for accepting the radical idealist doctrine; for it

appears that causality does in fact have a mind-independent existence. Thus, the argument from certainty is, unfortunately for Schopenhauer, unconvincing.[222]

7.4. The Argument from Simplicity

Schopenhauer (1969b: 9) claims that the materialist posits a redundant second objective world, "which, although completely separated from the first [i.e. subjective, mind-dependent world], resembles it to a nicety". Thus, the fact that the "absolutely *objective* world outside the head" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 9) is essentially akin to "the second world already known *subjectively*" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 10), which is, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 4), the more immediate and therefore antecedent, it follows that the derivative objective world is a redundancy.

In response to this argument, I wish to observe that it inadvertently presupposes the derivative nature of the objective world from the subjective (as opposed to the contrary, which I consider veracious). However, in order for the mind to contain real sensations – as opposed to hallucinatory ones – it is necessary to assume that the former correspond to external, i.e., mind-independent, objects. In this way the subjective world is a derivative of the objective, and not *vice versa* as the argument surreptitiously intimates. It is evident that Schopenhauer (1969b: 9) attempts to intentionally invert the process in order to prove the veracity of radical idealism, for he (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 4) wishes to avow the primacy of the subjective over the objective. Yet, it seems to me that one can only distinguish reality from illusion if the subjective world is a derivative of the objective and *not* if the objective world is a derivative of the subjective. For if the subjective world is permitted precedence over the objective, then ultimately *all* phenomena must be regarded as an illusion, i.e. everything we experience is essentially an hallucination. This undoubtedly accords with Schopenhauer's (1969a: 16-18) view

[222] Shortly, I shall attempt to corroborate this argument by observing that one never actually knows *a priori* the precise cause of a particular phenomenon; which, it seems to me, we ought to be able to do if causality were truly brought to experience by way of the mind. The same is true, I shall argue, of both time and space.

of "life [as] a long dream", however, it renders the distinction between real and hallucinatory sensations superfluous in so far as both, in the last analysis, depend on the mind.

7.5. The Argument from the Subject-Object Antithesis

The argument Schopenhauer (1969b: 15) most relies on, according to Janaway (2002: 31), is that of the subject-object antithesis. In short, the argument maintains that an object, i.e. an appearance, cannot exist without the subject, i.e. a consciousness, and *vice versa*. Thus Schopenhauer (1969b: 15-16) states:

> "[…] *the intellect and matter are correlatives*, in other words, the one exists only for the other; both stand and fall together; the one is only the other's reflex. They are really one and the same thing, considered from two opposite points of view […]."

In this way Schopenhauer (1969a: 3) attempts to argue that "[t]he world is my [appearance]", for no object can exist independently of a perceiving subject; thus both are said to "stand and fall together" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 15). But upon closer consideration "[t]he whole appeal to the principle is, in short", as Young (2005: 28) correctly acknowledges, "a disaster". The reason for this is that the very point at issue is whether phenomenal objects are anything more than mere constructions of consciousness; thus one wants a genuine *proof* of the doctrine of radical idealism and not some irrefragable principle which presupposes it (Young, 2005: 28). For there certainly cannot be *perception* of an object without a subject, i.e. consciousness; but we want to know to what extent an object can be said to exist independently of the mind – and the fact, which I have reiterated *ad nauseam*, viz., that we have sensations which we can distinguish from hallucinatory ones, intimates that the world does in fact have a mind-*independent* existence.

Although the abovementioned criticisms of Schopenhauer's five primary arguments for radical idealism ought to be quite convincing of the untenability thereof, I shall in the subsequent sections present three further considerations which, in my estimation,

utterly decimate Schopenhauer's claim for the absolute dependency of the existence of the world on the mind.

7.6. The Status of the Mind: A Phenomenal or Metaphysical Entity?

The first of the three serious issues for the radical idealist claim within the Schopenhauerian system concerns the status of the mind. As I have indicated, the mind – by way of the *a priori* forms of time, space and causality – is said by Schopenhauer (1969a: 417-418) to construct the existence of the external world. In this sense, the world is said to be mind-dependent, i.e. an appearance (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 3). However, on numerous occasions Schopenhauer (1969a: 421, et al.) explicitly equates the mind with the brain;[223] inadvertently intimating that the source of appearances is itself an appearance.

In *Parerga und Paralipomena* in particular Schopenhauer (1974b: 273) inadvertently presents the difficulty when he states:

> "It is through the ingenious and mysterious structure of the brain which anatomy describes but physiology does not understand, that the phenomenon of the objective world and the whole mechanism of our thoughts are brought about."

Thus, as the abovementioned excerpt indicates, the brain is the location of the synthetic *a priori* principles, viz., time, space and causality, which make experience possible

[223] I wish to observe that Kant's (1950: 65) sagacious postulation of a transcendental apperception is not subject to the same difficulties as is the Schopenhauerian (1974b: 273) identification of the mind with the physical brain. For the transcendental apperception must, as its appellation intimates, be non-phenomenal (Scruton, 2001: 44), i.e. it must "precede" (Kant, A107) the phenomenal objects which it ultimately constructs. Thus, the source of the *a priori* mechanisms necessarily precedes experience, i.e. is not itself a phenomenal entity, and thus there is no contradiction in the Kantian notion that self-consciousness is an essential element in the production of the phenomenal world. One may therefore justly feel that Schopenhauer ought to have retained Kant's transcendental apperception as a necessary pre-condition of his radical idealist stance.

(Copleston, 1947: 48). But the real difficulty lies in the fact that the brain is said by Schopenhauer (1974b: 273) to be an organ within the human body; as such it must be an *appearance*. As a consequence thereof a grave difficulty arises as to the status of the mind within Schopenhauer's system and how, in short, it can be both the provenience of *appearances* and yet be itself an *appearance*. In short, Schopenhauer's (1974b: 273) assertion that the mind is akin to the physical brain and is yet responsible for the construction of the phenomenal world by placing raw sensations into causal, spatial and temporal relations (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 5-6), necessarily leads to the bizarre conclusion that the mind must, on Schopenhauer's account, be considered a *causa sui*,[224] for the brain is the ultimate source of all phenomenal entities and thus it must be the cause of itself.

In order to fully comprehend my criticism one need only realise that radical idealism is necessarily committed to the notion of the mind's priority; for if the world is merely an appearance therein, then the mind must necessarily be granted primacy. However, by identifying the mind with the brain Schopenhauer (1974b: 273) has unwittingly demoted the mind to a *secondary* position within his system. This pronouncement finds textual corroboration in Schopenhauer's (1969b: 201, et al.) emphatic and repeated assertion upon the intellect's auxiliary status; going so far as to explicitly declare it to be "an adventitious principle" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 466); the metaphysical Will alone is said to be "the primary and substantial thing" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 205). However, I conjecture, in response to my criticism, that the difficulty can easily be resolved if the Will can be construed as conscious and intelligent: for in this way the source of *appearances* may be said to be the transcendent consciousness, which is not itself an *appearance*, and thus the serious difficulty is averted. However, Schopenhauer's (1969a: 115, et al.) characterisation of the metaphysical Will as "blind" precludes the possibility of it being the source of appearances.

I retort, however, that in an earlier section I discussed at length the fact that the metaphysical Will cannot be "blind" in so far as it purposefully manifests itself in certain ways, in particular in organic phenomena (Young, 2005: 83). Thus, one may justifiably assume that the difficulty for the radical idealist stance generated by

[224] The concept of a *causa sui* – that something is the cause of itself – is truly absurd, for it is tantamount, as I have indicated elsewhere, to the notion of a man giving birth to – himself!

Schopenhauer's (1974b: 273) equation of the mind with the physical brain is resolved by way of the Will's teleological nature, which reveals its ultimate consciousness. In this way one could potentially argue that the phenomenal world is produced, not by the individuated consciousness which is ultimately a phenomenal entity, but by the consciousness of the metaphysical Will. Thus, the world would be said to be, not "my" appearance (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 3), but the metaphysical Will's appearance. Although I discern a way in which to salvage Schopenhauer's radical idealism within this maverick view, it necessarily entails an extremely controversial postulation, viz., a transcendent mind or consciousness. However, if we, like Schopenhauer (1969b: 214), consider consciousness to be a mere function of the brain, just as digestion is a mere function of the stomach, then we simply cannot maintain the possibility of consciousness existing independently thereof any more than we can digestion without a stomach. We can consequently avow, along with Schopenhauer (1974b: 273), that:

> "An *individual consciousness* and thus a consciousness in general is not conceivable in an *immaterial or incorporeal being*, since the condition of every consciousness, knowledge, is necessarily a brain-function really because the intellect manifests itself objectively as brain."

It ought to be evident then that Schopenhauer's radical idealism is founded upon an extremely insecure foundation in so far as the phenomenal world is said to be a product of the individuated consciousness, which ultimately depends on one's brain (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273), which is, in the last analysis, a physical entity (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 273). Thus, contradictorily the phenomenal world is a product of a phenomenal object, i.e. the brain. However, even if the world cannot *in toto* be a work of the brain it is still, I maintain, *partly* dependent thereon. Thus, although I reject radical idealism I accept the veracity of *partial idealism*; I shall return to this point in due course.

7.7. The Incompatibility of Schopenhauerian Radical Idealism with Evolutionism

The second difficulty pertaining to the issue of the mind in Schopenhauer's philosophy may be succinctly described as an empirical refutation of the radical idealist position. By this, I mean quite simply that if we turn our attention to the Earth itself and the rare

and extremely imperfect remains entombed in its soil, we find what is perhaps the greatest refutation of radical idealism, viz., the remains of organisms devoid of brains. But this fact is utterly inexplicable on Schopenhauer's radical idealist interpretation: for if all objects are mind-dependent how could the Earth and all its objects have existed prior to consciousness?

Here I wish to observe that the position of the radical Idealist is incompatible, even antithetical, to an evolutionary view of life. This is all the more striking insofar as Schopenhauer (1974b: 151-155) was himself an evolutionist, albeit one of a particular type.[225] As the matter may be of some interest to readers I shall present a succinct discussion of Schopenhauer's evolutionary views in the subsequent paragraphs.

Schopenhauer died one year after the publication of Darwin's masterpiece *On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle of Life* in 1859, and although he was consequently unable to study the work itself he was able to "read a detailed account" of Darwin's theory a few months prior to his death in September 1860 (Cartwright, 2010: 466n1).[226] One would be forgiven to think that Schopenhauer – the philosopher of pessimism who presented the unrelenting struggle of life so eloquently and memorably in numerous passages of his works (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 146-147, 1969b: 354, et al.) – would have praised the author of the *Origin of the Species* for his candid honesty with which he (Darwin, 2009b: 585-599) described the brutality of life in the state of nature.[227] But,

[225] Cf. Arthur O. Lovejoy's *Schopenhauer as an Evolutionist* (1911).

[226] I have opted to compare Schopenhauer's evolutionary views with those of Darwin's, as opposed to Lamarck's, due to the former's historical significance; for it was Darwin's theory in particular, as Okasha (2016: 8) notes, which sounded the death knell for the biblical creationist theory, which was thitherto the widely accepted view; and, further, Darwin's theory is still extremely influential in current science (cf. Dawkins, 2010: 18), despite the fact that there is an ongoing debate among a small group of scientists as to whether natural selection is the real, or only, mechanism by which creatures imperceptibly mutate into others (Dawkins, 2010: 17, 18).

[227] It is for his emphasis on the struggle for survival that Schopenhauer is sometimes considered a precursor to Darwin (Young, 2005: 86); but, as I shall indicate by way of footnotes throughout my discussion, there are numerous points on which the great thinkers are at variance with each other. However, in spite of certain differences, it will be recalled that in my discussion on

surprisingly, Schopenhauer (quoted in Cartwright, 2010: 466-467n1) wrote to his friend and acolyte, Julius Frauenstädt, that "Darwin's thoughts [are] "shallow empiricism" and simply a variation of Lamarck's,[228] and they [are] "in no way related to my theory". These remarks may appear perplexing to those who equate evolutionism with the name of Darwin and maintain, further, that Darwinism is the sole form thereof. Indeed, contrary to popular belief, Darwin was not the "inventor" of the theory of evolution, but the discoverer of the *mechanism* by which evolution is said to occur, viz., the theory of natural selection (Clements, 2009: 6).[229] Thus, it is significant to understand that it is the mechanism of natural selection that Schopenhauer rejects – that is "in no way related to [his] theory" (Cartwright, 2010: 467n1) – and *not* the theory of evolution as such. As Arthur O. Lovejoy (1911: 207) notes in his article *Schopenhauer as an Evolutionist*, in his later writings Schopenhauer "unmistakably announced – what

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Schopenhauer's pessimism I attempted to utilize the Darwinian theory as an "external" corroboration thereof.

[228] It is interesting to note that, prior to adopting and incorporating evolutionary views into his system, Schopenhauer (1889b: 262-265) mentions and criticises Lamarck's evolutionary theory as "an error of genius" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 264). His (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 262, 264) primary criticism is that Lamarck does not consider the metaphysical Will as existing "prior to the animal itself" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 264) as a creative force within nature, thereby fashioning creatures according to the environments in which they live. It is important to note that had Lamarck postulated a metaphysical Will as the mysterious force whereby evolutionism is said to occur, Schopenhauer would undoubtedly have found it perfectly congenial. However, it appears that Schopenhauer (1889b: 262-265) did not accept evolutionary views when he wrote *Über den Willen in der Natur* (in the mid-1830s); it seems he adopted and subsequently incorporated a particular form thereof only in or after 1847 (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 153-154). Indeed, I observe that Schopenhauer's particular form of evolutionism, viz., *generatio in utero heterogeneo* (generation in the womb of another), is conspicuously absent in *Über den Willen in der Natur*, thus corroborating my aforementioned claim. As shall become evident in the course of the discussion, Schopenhauer rejects Darwinian evolution for precisely the same reason that he criticizes Lamarckian evolutionism, viz., it does not postulate a metaphysical Will as the mysterious force driving the evolutionary process.

[229] Jean-Baptiste de Lamarck (1744-1829), previously mentioned, was in fact the first theoretician to propose the theory of evolution.

remained his final view – that the philosophy of nature to which his metaphysics of the Will properly led was of a frankly and completely evolutionistic type".

It is interesting to note then, as Lovejoy does (1911: 213n1), that Schopenhauer is often erroneously portrayed in the secondary literature as "essentially anti-evolutionistic" and often his evolutionism is entirely neglected and omitted from discussions on his philosophy. Indeed, even in his article entitled *Schopenhauer and Darwinism*, David Asher (1871: 312-332) – an acolyte and close friend of the philosopher, whom "Schopenhauer tried several times, without success, to induce […] to translate his philosophical writings into English" (Cartwright, 2005: 9) – fails to make mention of Schopenhauer's particular form of evolutionism and the incompatibility of the Schopenhauerian system with that of Darwinism in particular and evolutionism in general. As a consequence most of the observations presented here are novel; however, I must acknowledge that although I have been primarily guided in my current discussion by Schopenhauer's notions in his works *Über den Willen in der Natur* and *Parerga und Paralipomena*, I am also greatly indebted to Lovejoy's aforementioned article (1911) and Young's work on Schopenhauer (2005).

It will be remembered that Schopenhauer (1889b: 216) considered his metaphysics of the Will to be an essential component in acquiring a complete understanding of the universe. Thus, so far as Schopenhauer is concerned, any evolutionistic explanation must take into consideration the metaphysical Will and factor it into its explanation of the way in which organisms are said to evolve. Now, if we turn our attention to Darwin's (2009b: 600-640) mechanism of natural selection – despite a certain outer similarity to Schopenhauer's philosophy (cf. Asher, 1871: 321-332) – we find that it is entirely devoid of metaphysics – indeed, it does not require any metaphysical foundation in order to render it practicable or comprehensible.

In order to fully comprehend this, we must first enquire: what, in the first place, is natural selection? In his revolutionary *magnum opus* Darwin (2009b: 601) defines the mechanism succinctly as "[the preservation] of favourable variations and the rejection of injurious variations". By this Darwin portends quite simply that if – by some means

he knew not what[230] – an organism possesses a characteristic which is conducive to its survival then this favourable attribute will invariably be passed on to the creature's descendants by means of inheritance. If, on the contrary, a characteristic is not conducive – perhaps even antithetical – to the creature's survival then it will obviously not be communicated to future descendants, as the organism will undoubtedly perish in the struggle for life, for "nature cares nothing for appearances, except in so far as they may be useful to any being" (Darwin, 2009b: 602). By this means, then, creatures *gradually* and *imperceptibly* mutate from one generation to the next:

> "It may be said that natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing, throughout the world, every variation, even the slightest; rejecting that which is bad, preserving and adding up all that is good; silently and insensibly working, whenever and wherever opportunity offers, at the improvement of each organic being in relation to its organic and inorganic conditions of life. We see nothing of these slow changes in progress, until the hand of time has marked the long lapses of ages, and then so imperfect is our view into long past geological ages, that we only see that the forms of life are now different from what they formerly were" (Darwin, 2009b: 603).

In this view of evolution there is no mention or postulation of a metaphysical Will working, subterraneanly as it were, to affect the imperceptible changes in organisms. With his mechanism of natural selection Darwin had discovered a purely *materialistic* explanation of the way in which the process of evolution occurs (cf. Young, 2005: 87). Indeed, nowadays this is considered one of its greatest merits; but for Schopenhauer this was anathema to his *Weltanschauung*: for as Lovejoy (1911: 221) notes "[Darwin's] doctrine assigns to the organism itself, and to its inner potencies, an essentially passive role, development is, as it were, extorted from living things by external circumstances, and is not a tendency expressive of all that is most characteristic in the nature of organisms as such", whereas Schopenhauer (1889b: 216) maintains that he had discovered in the Will the skeleton key to unlock every mystery in the universe – that science, therefore, necessarily requires his metaphysics to complete its conception of the world (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 218-219). But Darwin's mechanism of

[230] Today, however, we know that this is due to genetics, and in particular mutations within the genetic structure of an individual organism.

natural selection did not, so I assume, appear to Schopenhauer to require the assistance of a metaphysical Will in order to render the notion valid or comprehensible. This, in my estimation, is what led Schopenhauer to reject Darwin: it was thus, as I said, solely a rejection of Darwin's *mechanism* by which evolution is said to occur, i.e. natural selection, and *not* evolution as such. We may therefore anticipate that Schopenhauer's evolutionism will undoubtedly take into consideration the metaphysical Will and accord it a central place.

Indeed, that is the case, for Schopenhauer's (1974b: 151-155) evolutionism is founded upon his teleological view of nature.[231] We must now reflect upon this concept at some length, for it is exceedingly significant to comprehending Schopenhauer's evolutionary views. For Schopenhauer, as Julian Young (2005: 71) notes, "organic nature is […] universally purposive"; this "purposiveness" can be seen, so Schopenhauer (1889b: 265-269) thinks, in the structure of each individual animal which is so well-suited to its particular mode of life. In other words, Schopenhauer (1889b: 266) views all organisms as the product of final causes (*causa finalis*) at work within nature. But causality, like time, can only be conceived to flow in one direction – regressive causation, as Young (2005: 86) notes, is impossible – indeed inconceivable. The concept of a *causa finalis* is to be thought of in terms of goals: an organ or the anatomical structure of a creature is brought into existence precisely in order to fulfil a certain purpose, "as if knowledge of that mode of life and its outward conditions had preceded the structure, and as if therefore each animal had chosen its equipment before it assumed a body; just as a sportsman before starting chooses his whole equipment, gun, powder, shot, pouch, hunting-knife and dress, according to the game he intends chasing. The latter does not take aim at the wild boar because he happens to have a rifle: he took the rifle with him and not a fowling piece, because he intended to hunt wild boar; and the ox does not butt because it happens to have horns: it has horns because it intends to butt" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 261). Now given that regressive causation cannot be conceived and thus utilised in the explanation of the purposiveness which we see everywhere in nature another

[231] It will be recalled that in 4.10. I discussed Schopenhauer's teleological theory in connection with surmounting the difficulty of solipsism in the Schopenhauerian philosophy. In particular, the teleological argument may be taken as evidence of the metaphysical Will's existence in other animate organisms. This section should therefore be compared therewith.

explanation must necessarily be proposed. Thus what, we may now ask, is directing the development of the structure and organs of an animal's body? In a word it is the Will (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 266) – the Will which "gives all things, whatever they may be, the power to exist and to act" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 217). Thus it is the Will directing, subterraneanly, the course and development of the organism's physical structure (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 266). "Most certainly", as Schopenhauer (1889b: 265) remarks, "the shape and organisation of each animal species had been determined by its own Will according to the circumstances in which it wished to live; not however as a thing physical in time, but on the contrary as a thing metaphysical outside time". Expressed somewhat differently we may say that the Will has a desire to actualize itself in some shape or form and it therefore does this by producing certain organs and anatomical structures:

> "[…] Every organ must be looked upon as the expression of a universal manifestation of the Will, i.e. of one made once for all, of a fixed longing, of an act of volition proceeding, not from the individual, but from the species. Every animal form is a longing of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*] which is roused in circumstances, for instance, the Will is seized with a longing to live on trees, to hang on their branches, to devour their leaves, without contention with other animals and without ever touching the ground: this longing presents itself throughout endless time in the form (or Platonic Idea) of the sloth. It can hardly walk at all, being only adapted for climbing; helpless on the ground, it is agile on trees and looks itself life a moss-clad bough in order to escape its pursuers." (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 245-255).

The Will in-itself is consequently the driving or creative force (Young, 2005: 83) – the *primum mobile*[232] – within nature: by its power it is able to bring into existence any creature it desires. But this notion of a teleological Will within nature is prone to a serious objection, one I have already touched upon and discussed. This may be expressed in the form of a question: does such a notion of the Will being a creative force not presuppose that it possesses knowledge? Schopenhauer (1969a: 115, 1969b: 349, et al.) emphatically insists that the Will is "blind", i.e. that it is utterly devoid of knowledge and consciousness. But how then can the Will be said to work towards the creation of some distinct type of creature within nature? In other words, how does the

[232] "The first movable thing"; "the first motive" (cf. Schopenhauer, 1974b: 162).

Will *know* that in order to sustain itself the ant-eater does not require teeth, but rather "long claws on its fore-feet, in order to break into the nests of the white ant, but also […] a prolonged cylindrical muzzle, in order to penetrate into them, with a small mouth and a long, threadlike tongue, covered with a glutinous slime, which it inserts into the white ants' nests and then withdraws covered with the insects that adhere to it" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 260)? It seems to me that the postulation of the metaphysical Will not being illuminated by knowledge is inadmissible upon Schopenhauer's teleological understanding of nature. Indeed, I am confident in my assertion in so far as it is shared by another, extremely astute, Schopenhauerian commentator: for reasons I have just mentioned Julian Young (2005: 83) notes that it is "fairly clearly a mistake" to characterize the Will as "blind".[233]

Owing to its creative nature the Will can bring spontaneously into existence a fully formed organism; but Schopenhauer (1974b: 103-104) maintains that such spontaneity of generation – or *generatio aeqivoca* as he was fond of referring to the phenomenon – although a common occurrence among the lower organisms such as epizoa and parasites, cannot – for some mysterious reason – occur in the so-called "higher" organisms. In other words, Schopenhauer (1974b: 152) maintains that multicellular organisms, such as fish, amphibians, reptiles and mammals et al., cannot spontaneously appear from inorganic matter, i.e. "from some coagulating, sun-incubated marine ooze, slime or decaying organic substance" in the same way as unicellular organisms can, but had, rather, to be born either from an egg or a uterus. However, despite this qualification the Will is, according to Schopenhauer (1974b: 152), still able to spontaneously produce a creature *in utero* or from an egg. As a consequence thereof he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 152) propounded a particular theory of evolutionism which he cumbersomely refers to as *generatio in utero heterogeneo*.[234] Now according to this curious doctrine an entirely new species can be born from parents of a totally different species,[235] and

[233] Previously I illustrated the Will's consciousness and intelligence by way of Schopenhauer's theory of male homosexuality. These considerations persuasively illustrate that, contrary to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 115, et al.) repeated assertions, the metaphysical Will cannot be "blind".

[234] "Generation in the womb of another".

[235] On this point Schopenhauer is clearly at variance with Darwin for the former's notion that an entirely new species can be born from a totally different one is tantamount to the claim that

this process occurs, according to Schopenhauer (1974b: 153) in a non-linear direction, "but in several that rise side by side" (ibid.), as Schopenhauer (1974b: 153) explicates:

> "Thus, for example, there once emerged from the egg of a fish an ophidian, at another time from the egg of this a saurian; but at the same time there came from the egg of another fish a batrachian; however, from this there then came a chelonian; from the egg of a third was born a cetacean and eventually a dolphin. Later on, a cetacean again produced a phoca and ultimately a phoca once gave birth to a walrus. Possibly the duck-bill came from the egg of the duck, and some other larger mammal from that of an ostrich. In general, these events must have taken place simultaneously in many countries that were independent of one another, yet they occurred everywhere in stages which were at once definite and clear and each of which is furnished a fixed and permanent *species*.[236] They did not, however, take place in gradual and obliterated transitional stages, and so not on the analogy of a tone howling from the lowest to the highest octave, but on that of a scale rising with definite intervals and pauses."

Curiously, Schopenhauer (1974b: 152) maintains that the creative potential of the Will can only be called forth by way of exceptional *phenomenal* influences:

> "After the vital force of this couple's species had been checked in some way and had been augmented and enhanced in that couple to an abnormal degree, there now no longer emerged the likeness of the couple, but, by way of exception, a form directly akin to it, yet at a higher stage; and this occurred at a favourable hour, at the right position of the planets, and with a fortunate combination of all atmospheric, tellurian, and astral influences. Thus the pair had on this occasion produced not an individual, but a species."

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nature makes extremely vast jumps, i.e. mutation, on Schopenhauer's account, does not unfold gradually, but rapidly. Whereas Darwin (2009b: 689) had argued that *natura non facit saltus*, and hence the mutation of organisms unfolds by way of a gradual and imperceptible process.

[236] As previously discussed, this view accords perfectly with Schopenhauer's acceptance of the Platonic Ideas, i.e. each species has a corresponding Platonic Idea to which it stands as individual ectypes to a prototype.

The metaphysical Will is thus said to produce the multitudinous forms of organisms found throughout the world. But, it is to be noted that the way in which the metaphysical Will interacts with phenomenal objects (such as "the right position of the planets") thereby producing a new species, unwittingly intimates a *causal* connection between the *Ding-an-sich* and its manifestation, a matter I have previously discussed and which has tremendous implications for Schopenhauer's theory of immortality, given that the metaphysical Will is said to be utterly impervious to the causal law. Thus, we discern the Will's causal susceptibility to phenomenal objects in connection with the theory of *generatio in utero heterogeneo*. This is significant in so far as in the appendix I argue that the metaphysical Will can be causally influenced by phenomenal ascetic practices; thereby indicating that the Will is not, as Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) states, impervious to the causal principle. I shall return to this matter in due course.

Some twenty-years prior to Darwin's publication of *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871)[237] Schopenhauer (1974b: 156-159) applied his evolutionary theory to that of man and hypothesized as to the development of the multifarious human races. He (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 312) maintains that there are three distinct human types or races, viz., the Caucasian, the Mongolian and the Ethiopian. All three of these races according to Schopenhauer's (1974b: 156) theory, are not, as is the conclusion of the Darwinian theory, directly related but are the offspring of different types of apes.[238] Thus Schopenhauer (1974b: 153) writes:

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[237] Interestingly, in chapter XX of the third and final edition of this work (first published in 1877) Darwin (1909: 893) quoted Schopenhauer on love. It is highly doubtful, however, that Darwin ever read any of Schopenhauer's works, for the reference to the quotation cites Asher's (1871: 323) article *Schopenhauer and Darwinism* as its source. The actual provenience of Schopenhauer's words are to be found in chapter XLIV – *The Metaphysics of Sexual Love* – of the second volume of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*.

[238] In contradistinction to Darwin's (2009b: 808-810) theory of "centres of creation", i.e. the view that each species appeared in one area alone and subsequently migrated to other locations at various times and evolved accordingly, Schopenhauer (1974b: 155) maintains that descent from a common ancestor is "an absurd assumption" and that therefore "in similar circumstances but in different localities, nature repeats the same process and is much too careful to allow the existence of a species, especially of the higher kinds, to be quite precarious, by staking it on a single venture and thereby exposing to a thousand accidents a work that was for her so difficult

> "We will not disguise the fact that we should accordingly have to imagine the first human beings as having come in Asia from the pongo (the parent of the orang-utan) and in Africa from the chimpanzee, though not as apes, but directly as human beings."

What this essentially amounts to is the claim that these different races of man were produced *generatio in utero heterogeneo* in different locations, i.e. a chimpanzee in Africa gave birth to the first Ethiopian type, while the first Caucasian and Mongolian humans were the offspring of pongos.[239; 240] Thus Schopenhauer, in contrast to Darwin, was a polygenesist, i.e. he believed that the different human races are of different origins. Now it is interesting to note that in his classification of the human races Schopenhauer (1974b: 157) maintains that "colour is not the essential thing"; and he (Schopenhauer: 1974b: 157) maintains – correctly as far as genetic studies have revealed – that all humans *irrespective of race* were originally "black or dark brown" in colour. This is due to the fact that

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to achieve. Rather does she know what she wants, wills it decidedly, and accordingly sets to work; but the occasion is never exclusive and unique" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 155-156).

[239] I should like to draw attention to the fact that on the point of creatures evolving from extant species, Schopenhauer is, once again, at variance with Darwin's teaching. For according to Darwin (2009b: 784-785), the organisms which evolve from a parent-form will, owing to their adaptations, be better suited to survival, and as a consequence thereof they shall in the course of time supplant their parent-forms. This did not seem to occur to Schopenhauer, and hence he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 153) assumed that parent-forms could coexist with their mutated offspring-forms – for instance, a chimpanzee can coexist with an Ethiopian human in Africa.

[240] In connection with this theory, I should like to note here that when there was an exhibition of exotic animals in Frankfort Schopenhauer (cited in Thomas and Thomas, 1946: 237) reportedly went "[e]very afternoon […] to the fair and stared impressively at an [orang-utan] who stared back at him, unimpressed, from his cage. Schopenhauer was fascinated by 'the probable ancestor of our race'. He urged his friends not to miss the opportunity of seeing this [orang-utan]. '*Mon ami'*, he said to him on one of his visits, 'I regret exceedingly that I have not been able to make your acquaintance at an earlier date…Yes, yes, the frontal bone of your head is decidedly better formed than that of most humans…I am thrilled at the manner in which you stare through the bars. You have the strange and melancholy mien of a prophet gazing into the Promised Land.'"

> "[…] man's origin could have occurred only within the tropics because in the other zones the new-born human infant would have perished in the first winter. For although he had been nursed not without maternal care, he had yet grown up without any instruction and had inherited no knowledge from any ancestors. Therefore the infant of nature had first to recline on her warm bosom before she ventured to send it out into the rough and harsh world. Now in the torrid zones man is black, or at any rate dark brown. This, then, is the true, natural, and characteristic colour of the human species, regardless of race, and there has never been a naturally white race. In fact, to talk of such and childishly to divide people into white, yellow, and black, as is still done in all books, is evidence of great prejudice and a lack of thought."

Now it ought to be noted that, in spite of the abovementioned view, Schopenhauer does *not* reject the concept of racial classification, for as we have seen he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 312) acknowledges that the human race is divided into three distinct human types, viz., the Caucasian, the Mongolian and the Ethiopian. In other words, it is utterly erroneous to construe Schopenhauer's theory on the originally dark complexion of all humankind as intimating that all human beings were initially of, or descended from, the Ethiopian type. However, Schopenhauer (1969b: 547) rejects, as can be gleaned from the abovementioned excerpt, the characterisation of these three distinct human types according to the pigmentation of their skins; this is due to the fact that *all* three human types, *irrespective of race*, were originally "black, or at any rate dark brown" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 157), and hence:

> "[…] a white [or we might add, yellow or red] colour in the skin is not natural to man […] consequently, a white [or yellow or red] human being has never sprung originally from the womb of nature, and therefore there is no white [or yellow or red] race, however much this is talked about, but every white [or yellow or red] human being is bleached." (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 547).

It is for this reason that Schopenhauer (1974b: 157) speaks of the division of the human races according to colour as being "childish" and as "evidence of great prejudice and a lack of thought". Now I think that Schopenhauer's argument can be corroborated by the following observation: there are cases of albinism in Ethiopian people, as there are of melanism in Caucasoid and Mongoloid people; but no one would venture to assert that an Ethiopian albino is in fact a Caucasoid, or that a Caucasoid with hyper-

pigmentation is an Ethiopian. Hence, it would appear that Schopenhauer's thesis is indeed correct, for the pigmentation of one's skin *cannot* determine one's racial affiliation. If, on the other hand, the colour of one's skin *could* determine one's racial affiliation one would be coerced to regard Ethiopian albinos as Caucasoid, and hyper-pigmented Caucasoids and Mongoloids as Ethiopians. Such is flagrantly erroneous. But it is owing to the fact that all races were, I reiterate, originally of a "black, or at any rate dark brown" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 157) complexion that we should jettison the classification of the races according to the colour of their skin; for technically speaking the human race *in toto* must, according to Schopenhauer's theory, be regarded as black or dark brown. Hence, the characterisation of races according to the terms "white", "black" and "yellow" is indeed foolish and redundant. Nonetheless, the fact that Schopenhauer (1969b: 312) avows the existence of three distinct human races intimates that there must exist biologically appropriate characteristics to determine one's racial origins; but Schopenhauer does not, to my knowledge, offer explicit pronouncements on this matter.

For the sake of interest I should like to continue for a while longer my discussion on Schopenhauer's views on this compelling topic. It appears to me that Schopenhauer maintained that the various European races arose on the Indian sub-continent by way of his evolutionary theory of *generatio in utero heterogeneo*.[241] In other words, an Asiatic ape, most probably a pongo according to Schopenhauer (1974b: 153), gave birth to a dark-skinned Caucasoid which, in the course of time and for reasons I shall shortly elaborate upon, became extremely pale. Hence, Schopenhauer's (1969b: 547) theory

[241] In corroboration of this view I note that Schopenhauer (1974b: 404) considered the Greeks, whom he greatly admired (Russell, 1946: 782), as the first Asiatic tribes "to reach Europe". This intimates, of course, that the European population as a whole was originally from Asia, and because the Indians are essentially Caucasian people with extremely dark complexions – especially in the southern region of the Indian sub-continent – they must be considered the prototypes of the people who would eventually become "white Europeans". Thus, one must imagine that, according to Schopenhauer's (1974b: 153) theory, a pongo in India gave birth to the first Caucasian human, which had a "dark brown or black" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 157) complexion and would therefore have been considered an Indian by today's standards; these anthropoids gradually migrated Westwards until finally, in the frigid conditions of Northern Europe, their skin became totally pale (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 158-159).

leads to the conclusion that the forefathers of the European people were in fact the dark-skinned Hindus (i.e. Indians).

Given this theory of European origins, it is amusing that some, as Bryan Magee (1997: 437) notes, view Schopenhauer as a precursor to Nazi ideology. This view has been corroborated, perhaps unwittingly, in some recent works[242] in claiming that Schopenhauer was the philosopher Hitler most admired. However, Schopenhauer's (1969b: 547) theory of the originally dark-skin nature of all humans seems to be conspicuously at variance with Nazi ideology. Furthermore, far from sharing the Nazi admiration of blonde-haired, blue-eyed people Schopenhauer (1969b: 547) refers to such features as "an abnormality, analogous to white mice, or at least to white horses"; therefore, in choosing a mate for the propagation of the species "[…] nature strives to return to dark hair and brown eyes as the archetype […]" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 547). Such is conspicuously at variance with Nazi aesthetics and eugenics which sought

[242] Cf. for instance, Yvonne Sherratt's *Hitler's Philosophers* (2013: 23-24) and Timothy W. Ryback's *Hitler's Private Library: The Books that Shaped his Life* (2010: 104-105). I cannot desist from stating that I find the latter work highly dubious in so far as it appears to make unsubstantiated claims. For instance, Ryback (2010: 105) states unequivocally that "[…] there is no reason to doubt that Hitler owned copies of Schopenhauer's works […]", but that in the course of his investigations he was only able to discover "a single Schopenhauer volume among Hitler's remnant books, [viz.,] a 1931 reprint of Schopenhauer's translation of *Hand Oracle and the Art of Worldly Wisdom*, by the seventeenth-century Jesuit Balthasar Gracian". This work – which is, as Ryback (2010: 105) correctly notes, a translation into German from the original Spanish undertaken by Schopenhauer – can hardly be considered a part of Schopenhauer's *oeuvre*. Therefore, even if Hitler did read Schopenhauer's translation (for which there is, in fact, no proof; for merely owning a book does not portend the reading thereof) it could hardly be said that Hitler had thereby acquired a sufficient knowledge of Schopenhauer's philosophy by reading it. Ryback (2010: 105) also dubiously claims that "[the] most solid piece of evidence to the centrality of Schopenhauer in Hitler's life is the bust of the wild-haired philosopher that Hitler displayed on a table in his Berghof study". However, in spite of this bold assertion, Ryback does not include an image of this "most solid piece of evidence" – instead he includes the famous picture of Hitler gazing at a bust of Nietzsche at the Nietzsche Archives in Weimar – and, I may add, I have been unable to find any further evidence (pictorial or written) to corroborate Ryback's claim. I am therefore sceptical that Hitler ever owned or displayed a bust of Schopenhauer in his study.

ultimately to produce an Aryan race of blonde-haired, blue-eyed people. Taking these facts into consideration, not to mention anything of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 372) moral philosophy, I think it is highly doubtful that Hitler ever read Schopenhauer profoundly, if indeed it all.[243] Now, we would expect one who greatly admired the thoughts of another to attempt a refutation thereof when the former believes the latter to be in the wrong – all the more so on extremely significant matters; but I have been unable to discover a single piece of evidence that Hitler ever attempted to refute Schopenhauer's racial views, which are conspicuously at variance with Nazi ideology. These facts intimate to me that, if anything, Hitler was a pseudo-Schopenhauerian scholar.

Yet, in spite of the fact that Schopenhauer was certainly not a precursor to the Nazis, we cannot avoid the fact that he did espouse racist views regarding the intellectual and cultural superiority of lighter-skinned individuals. Hence Schopenhauer (1974b: 158-159) proceeds in his discussion on humanity by noting that "the highest civilisation and culture, apart from the ancient Hindus and Egyptians, are found exclusively among the white races" and he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 159) attempts to explicate this fact by noting that the Caucasian and Mongolian races "had to develop all their intellectual powers and invent and perfect all the arts in their struggle with need, want, and misery, which in their many forms were brought about by the climate". Thus Schopenhauer maintains that the colder climate in Northern Europe and Asia necessitated an augmentation in intelligence which has led to the higher civilisation and culture among the so-called "white" human race, while the Ethiopian race Schopenhauer (1889b: 271-272n2) considers to be the most intellectually inferior as is evinced by the fact that they "have become the special victims of the slave-trade […] though this by no means justifies the fact" (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 271-272n2).[244]

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[243] Recently I discovered a 1905 copy of Schopenhauer's *Die Welt* (edited by Eduard Grisebach), purported to belong to Hitler. The book was supposedly given to August Kubizek by Hitler when he moved out of the apartment the two shared in Vienna. I note further, that although the book contains a fair amount of underlining, there is no way to determine whether these were done by Hitler or by someone else. I mention this solely for interest's sake, as Hitler may in fact have read Schopenhauer's *opus maximum*.

[244] Although Schopenhauer (1889b: 271-272n2) clearly held racist views regarding what he called "the Ethiopian race", he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 212) was emphatically opposed to

This intellectual distinction between the races notwithstanding, Schopenhauer (1974b: 143-144) maintains that the human form – irrespective of race – is the ultimate *telos* of nature.[245] Such a notion may appear odd to the materialistic mindset, but once one understands that the notion is founded upon the teleological view of the Will, it follows that a hierarchy of forms is possible – indeed, even essential. The human accordingly stands at the very apex of the Will's hierarchical objectification. But why should the Will not manifest itself in an organism higher than that of man? The answer, according to Schopenhauer (1974b: 143-144) is, in short, because there is no need for it:

> "[…] in my opinion the stage where mankind is reached must be the last because here there has already occurred to man the possibility of denying the Will and thus of turning back from all the ways of the world, whereby the *divina commedia* then comes to an end."

It must be said that this is an extremely strange pronouncement as it seems to generate the accusation of a contradiction within Schopenhauer's thought. In describing the phenomenal characteristics of the Will Schopenhauer (1969a: 275) claimed that the term was a "mere pleonasm" for *Wille-zum-Leben*, as the Will incessantly wills life – *was der Wille will immer das Leben ist* (Cartwright, 2005: 187). But if that is the case, then what possible motivation can the Will possess to ultimately manifest itself in a creature which could potentially bring about its utter destruction?[246] Indeed, this notion seems to intimate that the Will – far from willing life – actually harbours a motivation directed towards self-destruction, i.e. the Will, on this account, seems to be suicidal.[247] Furthermore, the denial of the Will does not seem to me to emanate therefrom but from

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slavery, referring to the slave-owners in the southern United States as "a disgrace to the whole of humanity".

[245] In this respect Schopenhauer's (1974b: 143-144) view is, as Young (2005: 86) notes, at variance with Darwin's theory, for it leads to the conclusion that "Schopenhauer did not anticipate the continual evolution of the [human] species".

[246] I refer the reader to the appendix in which a detailed discussion of the abrogation of the Will can be found.

[247] I cannot help thinking here of Freud's (1950: 49-50) notion of the so-called "death-instinct" (Thanatos). Although it is important to note that the death-instinct, according to Freud (1950: 49-50), seeks to return to the inanimate whereas the Schopenhauerian abrogation of the Will seeks the absolute destruction of the phenomenal form.

the *liberated* intellect.[248] Thus, although Schopenhauer utilized this contradictory notion in his attempt to explicate the Will's gradual evolution from rudimentary organisms to its ultimate goal, viz., man, this is inadmissible within his system and should consequently not be done. There are other, indeed far more serious, contradictions and difficulties which Schopenhauer's evolutionism generates within his philosophy. Let us therefore now turn to the most serious, which is the primary topic of this particular section in my exposition.

It must be borne in mind that Schopenhauer probably acquired his theory of evolution in the late eighteen-forties (Lovejoy, 1911: 211), for he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 154) explicitly states that his evolutionism "was first put forward by the anonymous author of *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (6th ed. 1847)". As a consequence, Schopenhauer's evolutionism was a late addition to his system and we should therefore not be surprised that it generates problems therein. I shall now attempt to illustrate the primary difficulty which arises within Schopenhauer's philosophy when he propounds his theory of *generatio in utero heterogeneo*. One must bear in mind that originally the Platonic Ideas – although themselves the source of a peculiar difficulty in Schopenhauer's system – were initially (in 1818) utilised by him (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 127-130) to explicate the existence of multifarious creatures found throughout the world – both extant and extinct;[249] but once he had read the *Vestiges* Schopenhauer (1974b: 156-157) attempted to re-cast his views on the origin of different species by, as we now know, postulating the theory of "generation in the uterus of another". In short, the problem with an evolutionary view of nature for Schopenhauer is that it inevitably leads to the conclusion that consciousness did not always exist, but that it evolved, and that, therefore, there was a time when the universe was utterly *devoid of consciousness*. For the radical idealist it is contradictory to speak of alteration within the phenomenal world without a consciousness, for the *principium individuationis* and the *principium fiendi* are said to be brought to experience by way of the mind.

In fact we can discover references to this problem within Schopenhauer's (1974b: 140n1, 142) last major work, for there is one (lengthy) passage in particular in the essay

[248] Cf. the appendix.

[249] In fact, the Platonic Ideas are, as I have indicated elsewhere, perfectly compatible with Schopenhauer's particular evolutionism.

On Philosophy and Natural Science in which Schopenhauer describes the gradual ascent of the Will's objectification in the world of appearance. Therein he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 142-143) intimates – as is only inevitable upon an evolutionist view – that there was a period in which the universe was devoid of consciousness and yet objects – *appearances* – must have existed in order for the transformations to occur which would eventually lead to the appearance of conscious life. Schopenhauer (1974b: 142) confusingly speaks of the objectification of the *Wille-zum-Leben* being "restricted to its lowest stages, to the forces of inorganic nature" – a violent chapter in the world's history in which solely inorganic elements and inanimate objects existed – and thereafter of a period in which the world was populated solely by "the mute and still life" of vegetative matter. Now I enquire in all earnestness: can such a view of the gradual evolution of conscious beings from inanimate and non-conscious chemicals and matter truly be defended upon a radical idealist view, in which the world is said to be dependent in its entirety upon the mind of a conscious creature? I think the answer is self-evident.

Interestingly, Lovejoy (1911: 212) quotes the aforementioned passage by Schopenhauer (1974b: 142-144) at length in his interesting article, but he neither pursues the topic nor discusses this difficulty as to whether the evolutionistic theory and radical idealism are compatible in detail. Lovejoy (1911: 199-200) seems to think that Schopenhauer's evolutionism is perfectly compatible with the rest of his system because although the Will in-itself is said to be unchanging[250] the process of evolution applies solely to the world of appearances and does not interfere with the *Ding-an-sich*. On this point Lovejoy is not entirely incorrect, for it is quite true that the notion of organisms mutating into different species is not an issue within the province of phenomenal appearances; the difficulty arises when we pursue this thought to its *logical conclusion*, i.e. when we imagine a period utterly devoid of consciousness. Thus it seems to me that in his article Lovejoy appears to forget that Schopenhauer is also a radical transcendental idealist and therefore the consequences of the theory of evolution generate a unique problem for him – as indeed they do for any individual who maintains both an evolutionist *and* a radical idealist theory simultaneously.

[250] A notion I dispute and believe I have refuted in my exposition on the ascetic aspect of Schopenhauer's philosophy, cf. the appendix herein.

The predicament here is an obvious one. Upon a radical idealist view, one in which no object may exist without a subject (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 15-16), i.e. without consciousness, how can the "dumb and silent life of a purely plant world" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 142) or, for that matter, a totally non-conscious, inanimate world, be said to "exist" as such? Without the recourse to a deity or some other ubiquitous consciousness the very notion is nonsensical upon a radical idealist view of the world, for without consciousness there simply cannot be any extant, i.e. phenomenal, objects – the world devoid of consciousness cannot exist as appearance, but solely as the Will *in-itself*.[251] But it is evident that the process of evolution applies solely to the objects in the world, i.e. to the world as appearance, and without the presence of that world it is meaningless to speak of evolution. In essence this amounts to the fact that upon a radical idealist view one cannot speak of life arising from inanimate matter and subsequently developing gradually by way of non-conscious organisms over the course of millions of years towards the so-called "higher organisms" which possess brains and consciousness. The radical idealist can only state that consciousness, for some mysterious reason, presents to itself the particular phenomena that it does. Of course, these organisms can be conceived of as evolving only in an extremely limited sense, viz., only in so far as such transformation was accompanied by consciousness, prior thereto no such alteration can be meaningfully conceived. Thus, from a radical idealist position, one can only avow evolution as occurring simultaneously with the existence of consciousness, but it is meaningless to speak of a non-conscious inorganic world existing prior to the appearance of consciousness, as Schopenhauer (1974b: 142-143) does.

Given the seriousness of the matter, Schopenhauer (1974b: 140n1) was indeed aware of the tension generated by evolutionism (and the Kantian-Laplacian cosmogony) and his radical idealist position, for he states (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 140):

> "[…] On the one hand, it must be admitted that all those physical, cosmogonical, chemical, and geological events existed even *before* the appearance of a consciousness and so outside this since, as conditions, they were necessarily bound to precede such an appearance by a long interval of

[251] Here again I observe that the Will's consciousness may be utilised as a solution to this serious predicament, but I do not believe it to be ultimately tenable.

> time. Yet, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that, as those events first appear in and through the forms of consciousness, they are absolutely nothing outside it and are not even conceivable."

It ought to be evident that Schopenhauer's difficulty in reconciling evolutionism with radical idealism is generated in part by his (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273) insistence on the mind being identical with the brain; thereby rendering consciousness dependent on a material, i.e. phenomenal, entity. If Schopenhauer, on the contrary, had been sagacious enough to argue for the transcendent nature of the mind he could easily have avoided this extremely serious difficulty by claiming that consciousness is independent of and antecedent to the world of phenomena. But the identification of the mind, wherein consciousness is said to reside (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273), with the brain precludes any such possibility. In short, it is Schopenhauer's radical idealism which identifies consciousness as dependent upon the phenomenal brain which renders an evolutionary view of nature untenable.

I maintain that had Schopenhauer possessed a less rigid mindset he would, in light of his (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 153-154) evolutionistic researches in the eighteen-forties, have adapted his radical idealist position which he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 3) propounded in 1818 to that of *partial* idealism, i.e., the view that the world of experience is mind-dependent only to a certain extent; but his notorious stubbornness prevented him from so doing. Schopenhauer wished to persist in his radical idealist claim which, as we know, maintains that without a conscious subject to perceive there can be no perceived object (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 15-16), and yet he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 140-141; 151-155) also wished to avow his theory of *generatio in utero heterogeneo* form of evolution and the Kantian-Laplacian cosmogony which presuppose a materialistic universe existing *independently* of consciousness. In my estimation I think that the two views cannot be reconciled with each other, and yet Schopenhauer was compelled to find some explanation in which both positions can be avowed simultaneously. To that end he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 140n1) attempts to resolve this difficulty, unsuccessfully in my estimation, by arguing that "[t]he *geological events* which preceded all life on Earth" are "merely *hypothetical*", intimating that "*if* a consciousness had existed in those primeval times, then such events would have appeared in it". This attempted solution to the problem as to how life could have evolved from inorganic and non-conscious matter unwittingly applies both the

principium individuationis and the *principium fiendi* to the world as it is in-itself. For if the Will's phenomenal manifestations existed in a "hypothetical" state prior to the appearance of consciousness that could have actualised or materialised "*if* a brain had existed at that time" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 141n1), then one has unwittingly intimated that the metaphysical Will itself is susceptible to both transformation and individuation. For, even without conscious observation, the metaphysical Will must evidently undergo a process of transformation in order to reach the point of animal consciousness (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 143) whereby the Will is able to behold itself. It is conspicuously evident, then, that Schopenhauerian radical idealism is incompatible with evolutionism, for the former requires consciousness as a prerequisite for all possible occurrences, whereas the latter maintains that consciousness is inessential, i.e. an adventitious phenomenon which in no way grounds or makes experiences possible. One must therefore choose either the one position or the other, but we cannot avow both simultaneously as Schopenhauer (1969a: 3, 1974b: 152-153) wishes to do. To do so is to avow antithetical theories which cannot be reconciled with each other.

Thus I confidently conclude that Schopenhauerian evolutionism is necessarily committed to a form of materialism. For according to an evolutionary account it is by a process of mutations that the attributes of conscious organisms have been attained. In this way, the brain – given that it is a bodily organ (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273-274) – must have evolved from an extremely rudimentary (non-conscious) organ. Thus, on Schopenhauer's (1974b: 140) account, there must have existed an era in which the world – and perhaps even the universe – was devoid of consciousness. For the radical idealist such a concept is inadmissible, but then we should allow empirical evidence to decide the matter: for, as I mentioned, the position of the radical idealist is utterly unable to explicate the existence of fossilised creatures devoid of brains in the earliest strata found on Earth.[252]

[252] I reiterate that a possible solution to this predicament is the postulation of a transcendent consciousness; for in this way radical idealism and evolutionism are not necessarily incompatible: non-conscious organisms can evolve given that they exist within the transcendent consciousness. But on Schopenhauer's account, wherein consciousness is said to be dependent on the phenomenal brain (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273), such a solution is not possible. The

To persist in the Schopenhauerian view of radical idealism in the face of these irrefragable facts one would have to appeal to a transcendent mind (either in the form of a soul or a deity) in the way in which George Berkeley (2004a: 108-109) had done. Indeed, it is no coincidence that Berkeley (2004a: 109) – the radical idealist *par excellence* – was a religious man, for the position requires, as I have indicated, the postulation of a transcendent mind, i.e. a soul or an omniscient deity. However, such a position is, to my mind, repugnant, and it is not my intention to propound flawed views, which, moreover, are untenable on Schopenhauer's (1974b: 273-274) principles.

7.8. Time, Space and Causality as Mind-Independent

I turn now to a further criticism of Schopenhauer's radical idealist position, which has already been touched upon, albeit in a different respect. In the first section on idealism, in which I was discussing the similarities and dissimilarities between the three different varieties of idealism, viz., Berkeleyan, Kantian and Schopenhauerian, I argued that the only cogent explanation for the existence of multifarious objects in the world of appearances – which are often harrowing or dangerous to the subject in whom such appearances are said ultimately to derive – is the postulation that there is something inherently unique to each object, i.e. that every individual object must contain in-itself – as a *Ding-an-sich* – some particular property or properties which render them as they are. I argued that the radical idealist's thesis, viz., that the world, with its innumerable objects, is nothing more than a mind-dependent appearance (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 3), is ultimately untenable; for it cannot explicate the existence of the manifold objects found throughout the universe. Both the Berkeleyan and Schopenhauerian varieties of idealism cannot explicate the appearance of disagreeable and, indeed, often dangerous, objects which are said to emanate from the consciousness of a benevolent deity or the human mind, respectively. I took this criticism to be a harsh repudiation of radical idealism; and I argued, therefore, that the only way in which such a difficulty can be surmounted is by way of an appeal to the inherent properties of the object in-itself. In

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difficulties generated by Schopenhauer's (1974b: 273) identification of the mind with the physical brain necessarily vitiate his argument for radical idealism.

other words, every object must contain within itself certain properties which render it as it is and not otherwise. I tentatively offer this interpretation as being in accordance with Kant's (1950: 36) intended teaching in which he declares his philosophy to be "the very contrary" of radical idealism, and I maintain that it inevitably leads to the doctrine of *partial idealism* (cf. Young, 2005: 54), i.e. the view that one's idiosyncratic understanding of the world is partially mind-dependent.

In the aforementioned section I was compelled to argue that there may be two types of causality, viz., a subjective and an objective form thereof. The postulation of the latter form of causality was used merely as a theoretical device, in order to explicate how the object in-itself is able to cause sensations in a perceptive being. Now, it seems to me that if it can be shown that the so-called *a priori* mechanisms of the mind possess a mind-independent existence, then the veracity of the radical idealist position is enfeebled. If such a possibility is demonstrated, it follows therefrom that Schopenhauer's (1974b: 271-272) doctrine of athanasia is untenable, in so far as it is founded upon the radical idealist doctrine. However, in attempting to demonstrate the mind-independency of time, space and causality I must insist that Kant's (1950: 37) critical philosophy should not be neglected: for as human beings we are limited by the finitude of our minds and we cannot be certain of anything which transcends our experience. There are things for which we are, and must forever remain, ignorant: *ignoramus et ignorabimus*.[253] Consequently, in the subsequent section I do not wish to be taken as offering definitive proof of the independent nature of time, space and causality; I merely wish to propose the *possibility* that these essential forms of experience may be mind-independent. To that end, I turn to a criticism of the Schopenhauerian notion that time, space and causality emanate from the human mind.

According to the *principium fiendi*, which is the first class of objects for the subject which Schopenhauer (1889a: 47) discusses in his doctoral dissertation, the mind imposes the law of causality onto the sensory material received thereby. Causality is thus "an *a priori* and necessary truth" (Cartwright, 2005: 140) and it has no existence beyond the mind, which is to say that it applies solely to appearances and not to the *Ding-an-sich*. It is primarily for this reason, i.e. that causality is *a priori*, that Schopenhauer (1969a: 436) excoriates Kant and rejects the claim that the *Ding-an-sich*

[253] "We do not know and we shall not know".

causes sensations. Causality, on Schopenhauer's (1969a: 436) account, thus exists solely in so far as a perceiving mind is present. Now I believe that a young, inquisitive mind may be greatly impressed upon first learning of the *a priority* of causality, for it appears, *prima facie*, to resolve Hume's (2007: 60) scepticism relating thereto. For if causality is an *a priori* form of the mind then it is not, as Hume (2007: 60) maintains, impossible for a scientist to speak meaningfully of causal relations. But if one investigates the matter more profoundly difficulties begin to appear; just as one notices cracks in the paint of an oil painting only upon close inspection, which from a distance were utterly unnoticeable. For it seems to me that if causality were indeed *a priori* then we should be able to determine the causal connection between objects and events *a priori*. Yet, when we consider even the simplest of phenomena we realise how profoundly ignorant we are: we cannot accurately determine *a priori* the *vera causa* of most occurrences. But this seemingly trivial observation intimates to me that causality is, in fact, *mind-independent*.

As intimated, the provenience of the notion of the *a priority* of the causal law is to be discovered in Kant's (1950: 17-19) attempt to address the scepticism of Hume. Now, a matter upon which I must be emphatically perspicuous and have yet to earnestly discuss is the precise meaning thereof. For when one declares that *the mind imposes causality upon the sensations* does one portend that a particular instantiation of the causal law is brought to experience by way of the mind, or is a more general meaning of the concept intended? If the latter is the intended meaning then the mind only knows *a priori* in a *general sense* that every effect must have an antecedent cause, it does not in fact impose a particular instantiation of the causal law onto phenomena and hence it cannot immediately know – if indeed it can at all – the *vera causa* of phenomena. It will be remembered that Hume (2007: 41-42) claimed that all causal connections amount, in the final analysis, to nothing more than an arbitrary connection among objects. Of course, it is preferable and consequently enticing to interpret Kant's (1950: 17-19) response to Hume as a theory in which the mind applies a particular instantiation of the causal law onto the sensory data received; for it seems to me that Hume's scepticism is resolved solely by way of this interpretation, i.e. if the mind is construed to impose a *particular* instantiation of the causal law onto phenomena.

However, it is not difficult to refute this dubious analysis, for many individuals tend to err in identifying the genuine cause, the *vera causa*, of a particular effect. Indeed, we

often find an array of competing causal explanations for an unknown phenomenon. Let us take as a simple, yet compelling, illustration of the point I am attempting to propound here the movement of the Sun in the firmament. The most reasonable explanation for this occurrence is that of the geocentric view (Stuart, 2018: 18-19), i.e. that the Earth is stationary and the Sun revolves around it, for this is the way in which it appears when one considers the phenomenon from the Earth. However, in attempting to explicate this same occurrence, the Aztecs posited that if Huitzilopochtli[254] were not offered the heart and blood of a human the Sun would remain immobile; hence the movement of the Sun was thought by that ancient culture to be powered by metaphysical forces. Then, of course, there is the heliocentric theory (Stuart, 2018: 22-23), which maintains that the Earth and other planets revolve around the Sun. Given that we have here three conflictual causal explanations for the same phenomenon, it would appear that Kant's theory of the *a priority* of causality is erroneous if we adopt the view that the mind imposes a particular instantiation of causality onto the received sensory data, for we must assume that the innate mechanisms of the mind are approximately homogenous among thinking beings given the general concurrence on the way in which we perceive the world, and hence one would expect everyone to offer the identical causal explanation for every universally perceived effect. It cannot be then that Kant – a genius as he certainly was – propounded such a fragile theory. The logical answer is that Kant meant by his theory that the mind imposes the law of causality only in a *general* manner, as opposed to it imposing a particular instantiation of the causal law; this general law may be succinctly expressed as "for every effect there must of necessity exist an antecedent cause", which is necessarily *mind-dependent*. In this way, we are able to explicate the numerous divergent causal explanations which abound in the world for every possible phenomenon.

But this understanding, like a curative medicine which invariably has a side-effect, generates a serious problem. For it would appear that Kant does *not* in fact resolve Hume's scepticism in so far as the issue of arbitrarily associating objects according to a *general* law of causality does not in fact prove their actual causal connection. By this I mean that even though the mind may *know* that every effect presupposes a cause, it still cannot correctly identify the particular cause thereof and hence Hume's (2007: 60)

[254] An Aztec deity.

predicament remains, for how can one be certain of the veracity of one's idiosyncratic causal explanations? It is one thing to say that the human mind knows *a priori* and in *general* that a cause must precede an effect, but it is quite another to say that a *particular cause* is directly responsible for the appearance of a *particular effect*. It seems to me that Hume's (2007: 60) scepticism pertains to the latter, and if one cannot convincingly prove the causal relationship between two objects then scepticism concerning their causal connection must remain. This observation is, in addition to the fact that objects often present themselves as disagreeable and even dangerous, yet another cogent reason for rejecting the *a priority* of the causal law. However, I do not wish to give the erroneous impression that Kant is entirely incorrect and that his theory is devoid of value. On the contrary, the notion that the mind contains within itself a general understanding of certain significant features of experience leads to a profound view with tremendous explanatory power; for it intimates that one's understanding of the world does, to a certain extent – albeit not entirely – depend on the human mind.

The discrepancy between the numerous causal explanations propounded by individuals intimates that the idiosyncratic world of the individual *is* to a certain extent mind-dependent. Thus, from the perspective of the Aztec he is correct in his causal explanation of the movement of the Sun in the firmament, just as is the unscientific layman in his assumption that the Sun revolves around the Earth. This is the doctrine of *partial idealism* (cf. Young, 2005: 54), by which is meant that the world one knows is *partially* constructed by the mind. Thus, each individual possesses an idiosyncratic interpretation of the world peculiar to himself, which stands in contradistinction to the actual empirical world; although the former may at times concur with the latter it does not necessarily do so. Indeed, following Kant (1950: 37), we must avow that it is impossible for us to know with any certitude whether or not our idiosyncratic interpretations accord with reality as it is in-itself. For our finite minds are incapable of comprehending reality to its very depths; to reiterate the maxim I quoted earlier on numerous occasions: *ignoramus et ignorabimus*.[255] I take the notion of idiosyncratic

[255] Science, which may be defined as the systematic arrangement of objective facts, attempts to surmount the subjective sphere by suspending the subjective and focusing solely on the objective. However, given that the scientist is a subjective individual it is unrealistic to expect him to be entirely objective. Thus, even the scientific standpoint, given that it has its

causality to be an extremely significant one for it explicates the disparities in causal explanations among different people. There is much truth in the claim that the mind imposes a *general* causal assumption onto phenomena in so far as individuals do attempt to surmise causal explanations for the phenomena they witness, but it is evidently erroneous to claim that causality itself emanates from the mind. In connection therewith, I wish to observe that the human mind tends to postulate causal explanations even in instances in which it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to determine the *vera causa* of a particular phenomenon. For instance, a medical doctor may attribute the development of an illness to one cause, but upon further examination he may conclude that a different cause is responsible for the aetiology of the disorder; one need only think of the numerous misdiagnoses constantly made by even the most eminent medical practitioners as proof of this observation. Therefore, although it may not be consoling to an ailing patient, it may be said that a medical doctor can at best always and only offer an idiosyncratic explanation for the development of a disease. Sometimes, as one inevitably hopes, the doctor's diagnosis accords closely with the unknown reality, and the patient is able to partially or fully recover; but if the doctor's idiosyncratic diagnosis is inaccurate the patient will inevitably worsen.

Now it might enter into the minds of some creative readers, that a possible response to the observation of manifold causal explanations is due to a faulty application of the law of causality. However, it is inadmissible to argue that this is the source of the error in the causal explanation for by this one implicates *thinking*, which is foreign to the *principium fiendi*. Indeed, the principle of sufficient reason of becoming is concerned solely with the Understanding (Hamlyn, 2009: 16); and in his appendix to the first volume of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969a: 439) explicitly states that thinking is concerned with reason [*Vernunft*] and concepts, and is therefore the province of the principle of sufficient reason of knowledge (*principium cognoscendi*). The numerous idiosyncratic causal explanations are therefore not a consequence of a faulty application

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foundations in the human individual, is not impervious to the influence of erroneous idiosyncrasies. In spite of this obvious limitation, the scientific method is the most objective discipline possessed by humankind and it ought therefore to be valued as its most sacred possession. He who lambastes science is as ignorant as he who venerates it as an omniscient deity, both I consider contemptuous positions.

of the *principium fiendi*. In concluding, I note, therefore, that the existence of numerous causal explanations for one and the same phenomenon refutes the claim for the *a priority* of the causal law, for if causality truly emanated from the mind we should all possess identical causal explanations. So much then for the mind-independentness of the causal law.

Likewise, I take issue with Schopenhauer's (1974b: 283) claim that time emanates from the mind. In order to refute this claim my intention is to illustrate that there are in fact two aspects of time: an internal and an external. The internal sense of time is entirely mind-dependent, whereas the external form of time is wholly mind-independent. In my view Schopenhauer's (1974b: 283) assertion of the ideality of time implicitly confounds the external, mind-independent, sense of time with that of the internal, mind-dependent, form thereof. Hence, if it can be shown that the internal sense of time does not correspond to the external, it seems to me that an objective, i.e. mind-independent, form of time will thereby be proven to exist.

In contradistinction to Schopenhauer's (1974b: 283) view, therefore, I note that if time were truly mind-dependent then it seems to me that we should be able to accurately gauge the passing thereof and that moreover, an idiosyncratic dilation or contraction in one's idiosyncratic sense of time ought to correspond to the objective, i.e. mind-independent, form thereof. However, I maintain that the mind is incapable of correctly determining the precise lapsing of time, and this may be empirically demonstrated and proved in the following way: one should time what they imagine to be the passing of five minutes on a watch, without actually looking at the instrument. I have found that without constant practice I am incapable of accurately determining the passing of the specified time and this I take as proof of the fact that time cannot be mind-dependent; for if time truly emanated from the mind one would not be incapable of accurately gauging it.

Moreover, and more significantly, I observe that the contraction and dilation of one's idiosyncratic sense of time does not affect the passing of objective time. Research has shown that illness, such as fever (Goudsmit and Claiborne, 1970: 15) and narcotics can alter one's perception of time; as Goudsmit and Claiborne (1970: 15) note:

> "[i]n general, stimulants like caffeine and amphetamine, which speed up metabolism, make time seem longer; depressants like barbiturates or opiates make it seem shorter."

Now if time truly emanated from the mind, as Schopenhauer (1974b: 283) claims, then it seems to me that any dilation or contraction in one's perception of time ought to correspond to the mind-independent form thereof. In other words, Thomas De Quincey, for instance, ought to have found himself suddenly existing in the future after he had ingested opium for he (quoted in Goudsmit and Claiborne, 1970: 15) claimed that under its influence "he seemed to live as much as one hundred years in a single night". Yet, after the influence of the narcotic had worn off, De Quincey undoubtedly found himself to be no farther in the future than an individual who had not ingested the substance. It therefore appears that we exist *within* an *objective* framework of time and that time does not originate from the perceiving mind; as such we can declare in contradistinction to Schopenhauer's (1974b: 283) teaching that:

> "[t]ime is something purely objective and real, existing quite independently of me. I am thrown into it only accidently, have got possession of a small portion of it, and have thus arrived at a transient reality just as thousands of others before me who are now no more, and I too shall very soon be nothing. Time, on the other hand, is that which is real; it then goes on without me." (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 272).

Finally, space, too, cannot be mind-dependent, for if it were then one should not be susceptible to geometrical deception. Geometrical relations are essentially *relative*, in so far as we judge the size and shape of an object relative to another. This relation should not be conceived, however, as mind-dependent, i.e. as emanating from the perceiver's mind: for the relation between two or more objects must necessarily be objective, i.e. based on the association between external entities. To take an illustration of the point I am wishing to make let one imagine that an average-sized man were to be placed inside a play-house, his entire body would fill the space; but the mind does not initially perceive this relation as it truly is: one imagines that the house is of the usual proportions and that the man is excessively large, i.e. "a giant"; it is solely when a third object, say a tree, is placed next to the house and the man that the mind adjusts its perception and realises that the house, and not the man, is disproportional, i.e. the relation of all three objects corrects the initial erroneous perception. Yet it is neither the

house nor the man which has undergone a transformation, it is solely the mind which has adjusted its view thereof. Now I maintain that if space truly emanated from the mind then one would not err in the manner previously described: one would know immediately, i.e. *a priori*, that the house was of an irregular size and not the man.

I take these considerations as offering compelling evidence that causality, time and space do not emanate from the mind, but that they must necessarily possess a *mind-independent* existence. However, it is significant to note that every individual does in fact carry around within his head a *subjective* sense of time, space and causality. In this sense, the mind does in fact partially construct an idiosyncratic reality for every individual (cf. Young, 2005: 54); but this idiosyncratic construction often does not accord with reality, which exists entirely independently of one's mind. Now if one admits that there is a mind-independent form of time, space and causality then Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3) argument for radical idealism collapses: the experienceable world is *not* dependent on the mind for its ultimate existence. Thus is the first pillar destroyed upon which Schopenhauer's (1974b: 270) theory of athanasia is based.

8. The World as Will: Part Two

I turn now to the second critical part of my exposition, wherein I shall attempt to illustrate the untenability of Schopenhauer's second primary thesis in favour of athanasia, viz., the identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich*. To this end I shall consider four primary criticisms of the thesis: (i) the problem of rendering the Will a concept, (ii) the problem of "intellectual intuition", (iii) that the Will is located within time and space, and (iv) that the Will is subject to change (i.e. the law of causality).

8.1. The Will as a Concept

The first issue I wish to consider is concerned with conceptual knowledge, as discussed by Schopenhauer (1889a: 114) in his doctoral thesis. It will be recalled that concepts are abstract representations of perceptions (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 115). Now it must be observed that when Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) confers the term "Will" upon that which he discovers by way of introspection, he has unwittingly transformed it into a concept; for all knowledge is essentially dependent upon the division of subject and object (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 15-16). In other words, knowledge of the world as it is in-itself requires that it becomes an object of perception for a subject. I note that the knowledge of the Will cannot be impervious to this principle of "no object without a subject". But if the knowledge of the Will renders it an object, then it must be subject to the principle of sufficient reason in its fourfold form. For the present moment I shall limit the discussion to the Will as object considered under the form of the *principium cognoscendi*. Now when it is placed under this particular form of the principle of sufficient reason, the Will, as Copleston (1947: 65) notes, becomes:

> "[…] an abstract term and a concept: it must be either mere phantasy or based on an idea of perception, in neither of which cases can it be an adequate expression of the noumenon."

It will be recalled that the way in which the mind formulates a concept is by way of abstraction: one experiences manifold similar objects and subsequently unifies these under a particular term or concept (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 115-116). Now it can be

shown that this is precisely the way in which the mind comes to identify "the Will"; for when one attends to his inner state one discovers a myriad of volitions: lustful cravings for numerous individuals, the desire for different kinds of nourishment, wealth in order to acquire many possessions, and so on. The mind abstracts what is common to all these, disregards what is inessential, and confers the term "Will" thereon. In this way it is evident that the term "Will" is a concept and as such it must be, as Copleston (1947: 65) correctly intimates, an appearance. Thus the concept of the Will cannot be utilised in connection with the world as it is in-itself, for being a concept it is a double appearance – twice removed from the *Ding-an-sich* – and hence it cannot pertain to the world as it is in-itself. To this end White (2008: 79) correctly states:

> "[…] If all concepts and all words are derived from [appearances], if all that is material in our knowledge comes from perception of the corporeal world and has its origin in sensation, and if reason cannot take us beyond [appearances], then we cannot reason to the Will, nor can we meaningfully talk or think about it. Still less can we acquire conceptual knowledge of it."

If the Will is indeed a concept then it follows that it must be a representation of (inner) perceptions, i.e. appearances. In other words, according to the dichotomisation between phenomena on the one hand and the world as it is in-itself on the other, the Will belongs to that of the former. Thus it appears that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) introspective method has not disclosed the nature of the elusive *Ding-an-sich*. But before we hastily conclude this section, I wish to discuss in more detail the reasons for stating that the Will is essentially a concept.

I must observe that the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind apply equally to inner, as they do to outer, perceptions. Now when Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) attempts to discover the *Ding-an-sich* he proceeds to his goal along the erroneous assumption that the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind pertain solely to *the external world* – that the fourfold root of the principle of sufficient reason does not, indeed, cannot, pertain to inner experiences and states. Of course, the error made by Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) is in thinking that introspection reveals the *Ding-an-sich*, whereas, in reality, it merely discloses another phenomenal realm.

If we attempt to adumbrate Schopenhauer's reasoning, we can say that there is solely one object known by every individual in a twofold manner: one side of this object is

publicly experienceable (i.e. other individuals are able to perceive it) and it is phenomenal, like all other objects, whereas the other side can only be experienced by one individual, i.e. the subject himself, which Schopenhauer (1969b: 7) erroneously takes to be indicative of the *Ding-an-sich*. One's own body is indeed a unique object for precisely this reason; but it does not follow that because only I can experience my inner states directly they are equivalent to the *Ding-an-sich* and therefore impervious to the principle of sufficient reason. That, of course, does not follow. As a consequence, we must acknowledge that subjective (inner) states are indeed phenomenal in nature and are consequently susceptible to the influence of the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind in equal measure to externally experienceable objects. Once that is conceded the possibility of positively identifying the *Ding-an-sich* by way of introspection becomes a lost cause. Indeed, in the foregoing paragraphs it was conclusively demonstrated that the Will is subject to the *principium cognoscendi,* and in the subsequent discussions of this section it will be shown that the Will is not only susceptible thereto, but, more seriously, it is also subject to the *principium essendi* (in particular time) and the *principium fiendi*. Now by demonstrating that the Will is essentially an abstraction, i.e. a concept, we have proven that it is not impervious to the principle of sufficient reason, and that, consequently it is utterly incapable of being regarded as a characterisation of the way the world is in-itself.

I anticipate that there may be some who remain unconvinced by my discussion and for these incredulous individuals I offer a further corroboration of my thesis. It seems to me that we can authenticate the argument that the Will is a concept by recalling the fact that because the concept is an abstraction from perception (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 114), i.e. it discards what is inessential, it is something vague and intangible. Hence, if the Will is indeed a concept it must be possible to demonstrate that it is an extremely vague and intangible notion. It is the equivocalness of concepts which leads Schopenhauer (1889a: 116) to excoriate philosophical systems which base their fundamental tenets upon these diaphanous foundations. Thus Schopenhauer (1889a: 116) states of those who utilise concepts in this manner:

> "Of what avail […] can philosophical systems be, which are only spun out of conceptions of [the highest and most general] sort and have for their substance mere flimsy husks of thoughts like these? They must of necessity be exceedingly empty, poor, and therefore also dreadfully tiresome."

If the Will is essentially an abstraction – a concept – it raises the justifiable question as to whether Schopenhauer cannot be accused of the same offence. In other words, cannot the concept of the Will be said to be essentially "empty, poor, and therefore also dreadfully tiresome"? If it can be cogently illustrated that the Will is extremely vague and uncertain it may well be taken as a further corroboration of the criticism that the term is a mere concept and consequently does not disclose the nature of the world as it is in-itself.

However, it will be remembered that in the introductory section I explained that Schopenhauer (1969a: 111) thought his concept of the Will to possess great explanatory power; it was claimed that the Will is:

> "[…] no mere *ens rationis*, no hypostasis […], nor is it a term of vague uncertain meaning." (Schopenhauer, 1889b: 376).

In essence Schopenhauer (1889b: 376) claims that owing to the Will's immediateness it is something "which is better known than anything", hence it appears not to be something vague and intangible as is characteristic of concepts. However, when one attempts to explicate what precisely is meant by the term "Will" one inevitably finds oneself thrown into tremendous difficulty; for the Will is not easily explicable. Hence, Odell (2001: 54) anticipates that those unacquainted with the Schopenhauerian philosophy "may feel some uncertainty concerning exactly what Schopenhauer meant to refer to with the word 'Will'". Such uncertainty seems to conflict with Schopenhauer's (1969a: 111-112, 1889b: 376) view that the Will is known better than anything; for surely if the Will "is better known than anything" it should not generate any uncertainty and confusion? It was due to the inscrutability of the term that I argued in the introductory section that the term "Will" is – like the phenomenon of love – incapable of communication. In that particular section I presented the Will's incommunicability as not necessarily an impediment to the Schopenhauerian philosophy, but here I must confess that it appears to be a serious problem; for it seems to intimate that "the Will" is indeed an extremely abstract concept – generating uncertainty and being difficult to define and communicate.

It seems to me that there is a possible response to this criticism, for in defence of Schopenhauer one may respond that in order to speak meaningfully of that which transcends all experience and is truly metaphysical it is necessary to appeal to concepts.

Philosophy is in essence an abstract discipline, consequently its *modus operandi* is by way of concepts. Indeed, it is impossible to imagine a philosopher expounding a complicated system without utilising fundamental terminology (concepts). Thus, one may respond to the aforementioned criticism by pointing out that the Will is merely an *explicative device* which only approximates to the entity one discovers introspectively (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969b: 197-198). Upon this understanding the Will is acknowledged to be a concept, but it does not fully describe that which it is meant to symbolise. Thus, this response to our criticism dichotomises between incommunicable knowledge of the world as it is in-itself on the one hand, and communicable knowledge thereof which requires that it be conceptualised, on the other.

However, it is by way of this discussion that we discern a potential difficulty with the attempt to positively identify – or we might say, possess incommunicable knowledge of – the world as it is in-itself, which I take to be a corroboration of the Kantian doctrine and in particular the notion of not being able to positively characterise the world as it is in-itself (Kant, 1950: 37). Due to the fact that both outer and inner experiences are subject to the *synthetic a priori* mechanisms of the mind it seems impossible to know anything independently thereof. In other words, *all knowledge as such* is conditioned by these mechanisms of the mind – in the parlance of the Schopenhauerian philosophy: all knowledge is condition by the principle of sufficient reason – hence we must enquire if there is even any meaning in the notion of "knowledge independent of the principle of sufficient reason", for all knowledge presupposes the principle and is therefore dependent upon it. Thus the notion of "knowledge independent of the principle of sufficient reason" appears to be a *contradictio in terminis*. As Schopenhauer (1969b: 198) states:

> "[…] being-known of itself contradicts being-in-itself, and everything that is known is as such only phenomenon."

It follows that all knowledge claims are necessarily dependent upon the principle of sufficient reason, and hence the communicability of knowledge requires the employment of concepts as their *primum mobile*.

We have still to observe that even if, *per impossible*, one were able to *know* the world in-itself he would not be able to express this knowledge by way of words (concepts), for such expressions would reduce such knowledge to the inherent forms of the mind

(in particular the *principium cognoscendi*). Therefore, even if it were possible for Schopenhauer to possess knowledge independent of the principle of sufficient reason – something impossible on his own terms – he would still not be able to communicate it by way of a philosophical discourse. The response to our criticism that the Will is in fact a concept and therefore incapable of elucidating the nature of the *Ding-an-sich* is consequently insufficient; whereas the criticism that the Will is in fact a concept and consequently cannot be taken as a characterisation of the *Ding-an-sich* remains pertinent.

In summation, it is hoped that this discussion has made perspicuous that the Will is a concept and therefore subject to the principle of sufficient reason of knowing. As such it cannot be taken as a descriptive or explanatory term for the world as it is in-itself (the *Ding-an-sich*), which is ultimately impervious to the influence of that principle and therefore unknowable (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 198). I now turn to a consideration of an equally inimical and closely related criticism of the Schopenhauerian notion of the Will being identified with the *Ding-an-sich*, viz. that knowledge of the Will is a product of intellectual intuition.

8.2. Knowledge of the Will as a Product of Intellectual Intuition

In the introductory section of my dissertation I attempted to defend Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) claim that the Will is the *Ding-an-sich* by likening it to the sensation of being in love. This was due to the fact that, as with amorous sentiments, I maintained that the Will is capable of being known, but that the knowledge thereof is incommunicable. In other words, I maintained that an individual can attain knowledge of the world as it is in-itself, but that once acquired this knowledge cannot be passed on to others. It occurred to me that knowledge of the metaphysical Will would necessarily transcend the principle of sufficient reason and consequently such knowledge (which at the time I erroneously believed to be possible) would not be communicable for this very reason. I confess that initially the argument seemed meritorious to me; but upon further contemplation I am compelled to present the following criticism in opposition thereto.

Given that the Will is identified with the *Ding-an-sich* by Schopenhauer (1969a: 100, et al.) it follows that it must be regarded as a *supra-sensible* object; hence it must necessarily be impervious to the four forms of the principle of sufficient reason and cannot become a mundane object of sense-perception. But how, then, can such an entity – if indeed such a one does in fact exist – ever become an object for knowledge? It seems to me that knowledge of the world as it is in-itself can be acquired solely by way of "*intellectual intuition*". Now for the sake of comprehensibility, we may succinctly define the concept of intellectual intuition as the immediate, direct and complete knowledge of that which transcends experience, i.e. immediate and direct knowledge of ultimate reality (Cartwright, 2005: 89) – knowledge of the world as it is in-itself. In other words, intellectual intuition may be considered a "sixth-sense" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 521) whereby one has immediate access to a mind-independent world, i.e. knowledge of the *Ding-an-sich* or the way the world is in-itself.

Initially I failed to realise that Schopenhauer's (1889b: 376) claim that the Will "is better known than anything, and moreover in quite a different way from all the rest" is tantamount to the utterances of other philosophers and religionists who claim knowledge of the supra-sensible world by way of a direct mystical insight therein. This is all the more surprising in so far as Schopenhauer (1969b: 186, et al.) explicitly excoriates his contemporaries on numerous occasions for having recourse to this dubious form of knowledge:

> "All knowledge so gained [by way of intellectual intuition, i.e., a kind of ecstasy or clairvoyance] must be rejected as subjective, individual, and consequently problematical. Even if it actually existed, it would not be communicable, for only the normal knowledge of the brain is communicable; if it is abstract knowledge, through concepts and words; if it is knowledge of mere perception, through works of art."
>
> "[The philosopher] should therefore beware of falling into the way of the mystics, and, for instance, by assertion of intellectual intuition, or pretended immediate apprehensions of the faculty of reason, of trying to give in bright colours a positive knowledge of what is for ever inaccessible to all knowledge, or at most can be expressed only by a negation." (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 611).

Now, is not Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) claim that by way of introspection one discovers the Will to be the *Ding-an-sich* an appeal to the intellectual intuition he

(Schopenhauer, 1969b: 186, 611, et al.) so vehemently disdains and deprecates? For introspective knowledge is equally as susceptible to the principle of sufficient reason as is knowledge of the external world, as I indicated and discussed in the previous section. Yet Schopenhauer never admits this seemingly obvious fact; instead he (Schopenhauer, 1969a: xxi) appears to mitigate his anxieties surrounding this difficulty by way of a reaction formation. For in the preface to the second edition of his *magnum opus* Schopenhauer (1969a: xxi) boldly declares:

> "I am always to be found at the standpoint of *reflection*, in other words, of rational deliberation and honest information, never at that of *inspiration*, called intellectual intuition or even absolute thought; its correct names would be humbug and charlatanism."[256]

Yet there is a justifiable reason for Schopenhauer's (1969b: 289) denial and apprehensiveness regarding this matter: for the possibility of intellectual intuition presents itself as a serious difficulty with Schopenhauer's philosophy *in toto*; for the thesis that the Will is akin to the *Ding-an-sich* forms the foundation of his entire system; consequently, if Schopenhauer has based his philosophy upon the precarious foundations of an unproven "sixth sense" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 521) it will undoubtedly bring into question his many other theories and observations based thereon. Kant's teaching had indicated that between raw sensations and intelligible perceptions there stands the mind (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 417), which acts as a powerful distorter of the former. The presence of the mind, therefore, precludes the possibility of knowing what the world may be like independently thereof and in-itself; it is primarily for this reason that Schopenhauer (1969a: xxi, 1969b: 186, 289, 611, et al.) correctly excoriates those philosophers who appeal to intellectual intuition.

Now although Schopenhauer (1969b: 289) emphatically claims that he has "always stood on the ground of reflection, consequently of honesty and hence without the vain pretension of intellectual intuition or absolute thought that characterises the period of

[256] Schopenhauer (1969b: 289) reiterates this view in the supplements to the second book of the second volume of *Die Welt*, when he states: "[…] I have always stood on the ground of reflection, consequently of honesty, and hence without the vain pretension of intellectual intuition or absolute thought that characterizes the period of pseudo-philosophy between Kant and myself."

pseudo-philosophy between Kant and [himself]"; it may, in fact, be cogently argued that he is equally as guilty of the offence of a magical or mystical insight into the nature of reality as were those he so despised and excoriated. To fully comprehend this criticism we must observe that when Schopenhauer (1969a: 100) states that it is by way of introspection that one discovers the *Ding-an-sich* he unwittingly intimates that a supra-sensuous knowledge – i.e., a "sixth-sense", illumining the dark depths of ultimate reality – is possible. However, it is not at all self-evident that introspective knowledge should be impervious to the influence of the principle of sufficient reason. Indeed, as I mentioned in the previous criticism, introspective knowledge is equally as susceptible to the influence of the principle of sufficient reason as is external knowledge; hence the Will must be temporally[257] and spatially[258] situated and likewise must it be subject to the law of causality.[259] For this reason I maintain that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 99-100) introspective method is a surreptitious form of intellectual intuition whereby he attempts to discover the nature of ultimate reality.

Closely related to the aforementioned discussion is Schopenhauer's (1969a: 410) claim that mysticism is able to supply an incommunicable transcendental "knowledge"[260] of the world as it is in-itself:

> "If, however, it should be absolutely insisted on that somehow a positive knowledge is to be acquired of what philosophy can express only negatively as denial of the Will, nothing would be left but to refer to that state which is experienced by all who have attained to complete denial of the Will, and which

[257] Our volitional strivings "can be dated and their duration can be measured" (Edwards, 2009: 170). Cf. also Schopenhauer, 1969b: 197.

[258] The Will is akin to the bodily organs it manifests itself in (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 108); hence it must be extended in space.

[259] As discussed at great length in the appendix, the only way in which Schopenhauer's (1969b: 508) claim that the Will of the ascetic saint is abrogated at the moment of his death is by way of postulating the possibility of a transcendental change, whereby ascetic practices can causally affect the Will as *Ding-an-sich*.

[260] Strictly speaking, "such a state cannot really be called knowledge", as Schopenhauer (1969a: 410) notes, "since it no longer has the form of subject and object".

> is denoted by the names ecstasy, rapture, illumination, union with God, and so on."

I observe that this notion is extremely peculiar in so far as it intimates that one can acquire "knowledge" of something which in principle transcends the preconditions for all knowledge; thus, such comprehension is said to be "accessible only to one's own experience that cannot be further communicated" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 410). Now it will be recalled that in the introductory section of the dissertation I propounded the view of introspective knowledge of the *Ding-an-sich* to be knowable, albeit incommunicable; intimating that one can acquire knowledge of the world as it is in-itself but such knowledge must forever remain idiosyncratically esoteric. Further thereto, I argued, in this second, critical part of my exposition, that the description of this introspective entity as "the Will" rendered it a concept; consequently, the true *Ding-an-sich* – although in principle knowable in a unique way by means of introspection, according to Schopenhauer (1969b: 195) – is utterly incommunicable. Here, however, philosophical honesty and the pursuit for Truth coerce me to offer a rejection of my initial argument. For the detailed consideration of Schopenhauer's system leads to the inevitable conclusion that no such supra-sensible knowledge is even possible in the first place, let alone communicable. In the section on the criticism of the Will as a concept I argued that it is meaningless to speak of knowledge devoid of the principle of sufficient reason: knowledge necessarily presupposes the correlativity thesis (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 15-16), i.e., the dictum which declares "no object without a subject"; for in order to know something there must be a subject (i.e. a knower) and an object (i.e. the known). In other words, all knowledge claims presuppose the correlativity thesis and hence it is meaningless to speak of a knowledge which transcends it. In short, the fact that the Will is a known entity precludes the possibility of it being an accurate description of the world as it is in-itself; for the latter must necessarily transcend the possibility of being known.

8.3. The Will as Subject to the *Principium Individuationis*

As we have seen, one of Schopenhauer's (1974b: 270) primary contentions for immortality rests upon the notion that time and space (the *principium individuationis*)

exist only for the faculty of sensibility and are thus brought to experience thereby. Now the supposed atemporality of the Will, in particular, allows Schopenhauer (1969b: 325) to characterise it as something immortal; for as it does not partake of the form of time it is said by Schopenhauer (1969b: 325) to be eternal.[261] If, therefore, it can be demonstrated that the Will is in fact not impervious to the influence of temporality we shall earnestly undermine Schopenhauer's doctrine of athanasia. To that end I now turn to a consideration of the Will as a temporally situated entity.

Due to the fact that time is brought to experience by way of the sensibility, Schopenhauer (1974b: 283) maintains that time is totally mind-dependent: i.e., if there were no sentient beings in existence there would not be time. This thesis is problematical in itself in so far as it undermines the scientific understanding of the world: if, as I discussed in an earlier section, we are to think that time is mind-dependent then it seems impossible that the world could have existed prior to the appearance of sentient forms. For this reason I argued that Schopenhauer's radical idealism – which is committed to both atheism (Edwards, 2009: 173) and to the view that consciousness is dependent on the phenomenal brain (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273-274) – is antagonistic towards the scientific understanding which maintains that consciousness evolved from a state of unconsciousness. For our present purposes, however, the question with which we are primarily concerned is not whether it is possible to make sense of a non-conscious world gradually evolving into a sentient one without the form of time – and hence whether one can simultaneously maintain a radical idealist position and scientifically empirical *Weltanschauung* without contradiction – rather, we are concerned with whether the Will itself is temporally situated or not.

Now let us consider this matter by way of Schopenhauer's (1969b: 195) *modus operandi* for identifying the Will as *Ding-an-sich*: through introspection I judge myself to be fundamentally constituted by manifold insatiable cravings, which by way of abstraction, leads me to the knowledge of the general concept of "Will". The general concept of Will, being an abstraction, is a mere thought in the mind of a rational being, but the internal perceptions by way of which one abstracts the general concept are individual occurrences – temporally (and, incidentally, spatially) situated. Indeed,

[261] I remind readers that here, however, eternity is not to be construed, as is ordinarily done, as an endless duration of time, but as the property of timelessness (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 176).

Schopenhauer's (1969a: 106) claim that the Will is atemporal has been greatly contested since its inception.[262] The criticism is best expressed by Paul Edwards (2009: 170), who argues that volitional strivings are not outside time – "they can be dated and their duration can be measured". Upon a close consideration of the matter one can immediately discern the veracity of Edwards' (2009: 170) observation: each desire one experiences can be ascribed a particular time and its duration can indeed be measured. For instance, at certain times in the morning, afternoon and evening one experiences the pangs of hunger prompting one to seek nourishment. One could, if one so desired, determine the precise time at which these pangs of hunger appeared and ceased (thus determining their duration). Consequently, it is evidently erroneous for Schopenhauer (1969a: 106) to characterise the Will as atemporal.

But I must acknowledge that the observation that the Will is temporally situated appears to be extremely damaging, not only to Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia, but to his philosophical system *in toto*. For, as mentioned, the *Ding-an-sich* must necessarily be impervious to temporality and if the Will is located within time it obviously cannot be said to be an accurate description of the way the world is in-itself. One might think that this noxious observation would have prompted Schopenhauer to entirely abandon his thesis of the Will being the *Ding-an-sich;* however, Schopenhauer (1969b: 197) – being notoriously stubborn – refused to entirely relinquish his claim.[263] Thus, in the second edition of his *magnum opus*, Schopenhauer (196b9b: 197) explicitly offers a qualification to his most renowned notion, by propounding what we might call the "veil hypothesis". According to this modified thesis, the Will is said to be located behind the "veil of time", which Schopenhauer (1969b: 197-198) takes great pains to demonstrate

[262] For instance, in December of 1820 – only two years after the publication of the first volume of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* – a scathing review of the *magnum opus* appeared by F. E. Beneke in the *Jenaische Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* (Cartwright, 2010: 388). Therein, one of the reasons Beneke castigated Schopenhauer's identification of the Will as the *Ding-an-sich* is due to the fact that we experience successive acts of Will, which are necessarily located "within the *a priori* form of time" (Cartwright, 2010: 388).

[263] It is only fair to Schopenhauer to note that his entire life's work was founded upon the thesis of the Will being the *Ding-an-sich*; hence I think one can comprehend Schopenhauer's (1969b: 197) reluctance to entirely abandon a fruitful theory which he had spent his entire life developing.

does not entirely vitiate or obscure his claim that the Will is (the closest apprehension one can attain of) the *Ding-an-sich*. Thus, in the first essay of the second book in the second volume of his principal work, entitled *On the Possibility of Knowing the Thing-in-Itself*, Schopenhauer (1969b: 196- 198) states:

> "Meanwhile it is to be carefully noted, and I have always kept it in mind, that even the inward observation we have of our own Will still does not by any means furnish an exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself. […] But the inner knowledge is free from two forms belonging to outer knowledge,[264] the form of *space* and the form of *causality* which brings about all sense-perception. On the other hand, there still remains the form of *time*, as well as that of being known and knowing in general. Accordingly, in this inner knowledge the thing-in-itself has indeed to a great extent cast off its veils, but still does not appear quite naked. In consequence of the form of time which still adheres to it, everyone knows his *Will* only in successive individual *acts*, not as a whole, in and by itself […] Yet the apprehension in which we know the stirrings and acts of our own Will is far more immediate than is any other. It is the point where the thing-in-itself enters the phenomenon most immediately, and is most clearly examined by the knowing subject; therefore the event thus immediately known is simply and solely calculated to become the interpreter of every other. For in the case of every emergence of an act of Will from the obscure depths of our inner being into the knowing consciousness, there occurs a direct transition into the phenomenon of the thing-in-itself that lies outside time. Accordingly the act of Will is indeed only the nearest and clearest *phenomenon* of the thing-in-itself; yet it follows from this that, if all the other phenomena could be known by us just as immediately and intimately, we should be obliged to regard them precisely as that which the Will is in us. Therefore in this sense I teach that the inner nature of everything is *Will*, and I call the Will the thing-in-itself. In this way, Kant's doctrine of the inability to know the thing-in-itself is modified to the extent that the thing-in-itself is merely not absolutely and completely knowable; that nevertheless by far the most immediate of its phenomena, distinguished *toto genere* from all the rest by this immediateness, is its representative for us. Accordingly we have to refer the whole world of phenomena to that one in which the thing-in-itself is manifested under the lightest of veils, and still

[264] A claim I shall shortly dispute and reject.

> remains phenomenon only in so far as my intellect, the only thing capable of knowledge, still always remains distinguished from me as the one who wills, and does not cast off the knowledge-form of *time*, even with *inner* perception."

Now the "veil hypothesis" intimates what we might call a "multidimensional view" (Wicks, 2008: 131) of the *Ding-an-sich*. According thereto the Will is solely one dimension of the world as it is in-itself; and, by implication, the *Ding-an-sich* must possess other inscrutable dimensions. It is interesting to note in connection with this foregoing observation that Schopenhauer (1969b: 196) states that he has "always kept it in mind, that even the inward observation we have of our own Will still does not by any means furnish an exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself"; for in the first edition of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer does not explicitly refer to either the "veil hypothesis" or to the Will as being merely one facet of the *Ding-an-sich*. In spite of the glaring absence of such an important discussion, I have arrived at the conclusion that Schopenhauer's (1969b: 196) utterance is indeed sincere, and I wish to illustrate his genuineness by way of a circuitous consideration. In the final section of the first volume of *Die Welt* Schopenhauer (1969a: 409) observes that the ascetic saint's death "appears to us as a transition into empty *nothingness*". He (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 409) notes that:

> "[…] the concept of *nothing* is essentially relative, and always refers to a definite something that it negates."

Schopenhauer (1969a: 409) proceeds with his discussion by dichotomizing between two forms of *nothingness*, viz., *nihil privativum* and *nihil negativum*; the former refers to a relative nothing, while the latter refers to an absolute nothing. From this distinction Schopenhauer states (1969a: 409) that a

> "[…] *nihil negativum* (an absolute nothing) is not even conceivable, but everything of this kind, considered from a higher standpoint or subsumed under a wider concept, is always only a *nihil privativum* (a relative nothing). Every nothing is thought of as such only in relation to something else; it presupposes this relation, and thus that other thing also. […] Thus every *nihil negativum* or absolute nothing, if subordinated to a higher concept, will appear as a mere *nihil privativum*, or relative nothing, which can always change signs with what it negates, so that that would then be thought of as negation, but it itself as affirmation."

Now it seems to me that if it can be illustrated that Schopenhauer had already propounded in the first edition (1818/1819) of *Die Welt* that the ascetic saint's death is not an utter destruction (a *nihil negativum*) but is rather to be thought of as *nihil privativum* (a relative nothing), a multidimensional view of the *Ding-an-sich* had implicitly been intimated thereby. For if the saint's death is not a passing into absolute nothing then there must be *something* which still exists after the destruction of his portion of the metaphysical Will. But this *something* is ineffable to our finite human minds and hence it appears to us as *nothing*, i.e. relative to our position (a *nihil privativum*). The matter is extremely complex, hence we must attend closely to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 411-412) words in order to decipher his meaning. He (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 410, 411-412) says that from our perspective, i.e. from life which is nothing but the outward manifestation of Will, the ascetic saint's death – which is the utter dissolution of that Will – appears to us to be a passing into absolute nothing; but this is deceptive in so far as the *Ding-an-sich* must therefore be thought to possess other dimensions besides that of the Will (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 410). If the world in-itself is not Will *in toto* then it follows that the dissolution of the saint's portion of Will is not a vanishing into absolute nothing (although, relative to our existence, it does indeed appear this way). Thus, Schopenhauer's (1969a: 409) insistence on the inconceivability of *nihil negativum* (absolute nothing) seems to intimate a multidimensional view of the *Ding-an-sich*. As such it does indeed appear as though Schopenhauer (1969b: 196) had always borne in mind the difficulty of the Will being located within time and hence it "still does not by any means furnish an exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 197). It is by way of this consideration that I have come to the conclusion that Schopenhauer's (1969b: 196) utterance in the second volume of his principal work[265] is indeed sincere.

However, just as all curative medicines have unfortunate side-effects, so too does Schopenhauer's (1969b: 197-198) solution of the problem pertaining to the Will's temporality engender adverse difficulties. For, although the postulation of a

[265] "[…] I have *always* kept it in mind, that even the inward observation we have of our own Will still does not by any means furnish an exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 196).

multidimensional *Ding-an-sich* with inscrutable aspects might seem more plausible[266] and in unison with the Kantian philosophy,[267] it nonetheless must be noted that it generates profound complications for the Schopenhauerian *Weltanschauung*. In the first place, it corrodes Schopenhauer's (1974b: 300) arguments that the world is necessarily an evil place, filled with a profusion of suffering; and, in the second, and by implication, it brings into question the need for salvation. In an earlier section we noted that suffering for Schopenhauer (1969b: 634) emanates from unfulfilled volitions: if I desire something which I cannot acquire the result is an inner state of torment. Now if the inner being is not entirely identical with the Will then it does not follow that life must *necessarily* present itself as a tragedy, one in which we are all in a state of perpetual suffering. Perhaps in some individuals other inscrutable aspects of the *Ding-an-sich* manifest themselves in greater proportions to the Will and thus produce a different type of experience – one with noticeably *less* suffering. Hence, in such a case we would not expect suffering to play a prominent role in the life of such individuals. As Robert Wicks (2008: 131) notes:

> "[This multidimensional interpretation of the *Ding-an-sich*] demolishes Schopenhauer's philosophy. This, crucially, is if the thing-in-itself has innumerable dimensions, only one of which is "Will", then Schopenhauer cannot claim that the thing-in-itself is either only, or mainly, a mindless and amoral Will. If the thing-in-itself is not essentially Will, however, then there is no reason to expect that the world as [appearance] will present a violent appearance […] Individuals selfishly and aggressively oppose each other owing to the metaphysical fact that their inner nature *is* blind Will, not because the nature of reality merely appears to *us* to be in itself Will, or because Will is only one of possibly an infinite number of the thing-in-itself's other dimensions […]."

Closely related to the aforementioned difficulty is the need for salvation if the world is not essentially a manifestation of the Will. For Schopenhauer (1969a: 392) ascetic

[266] In so far as the allegations levelled at the Will (i.e. that it is subject to the principle of sufficient reason) are eliminated.

[267] In that it appears to render Schopenhauer a Kantian in the extreme; for, like Kant (1950: 37), it appears that Schopenhauer is arguing that the world as it is in-itself is ultimately inaccessible to human knowledge.

practices are intended to attenuate the potency of volitions (i.e. ascetic practices seek to destroy the individual manifestation of Will) in order to liberate the world from a miniscule amount of suffering;[268] but if the world as it is in-itself is not entirely identical with the Will it undermines the need to attain salvation in this way, as Wicks (2008: 132) notes:

> "[…] The multidimensional interpretation undercuts the motivation to achieve tranquillity through the denial-of-the-Will, for we deny the Will precisely because our projection of the principle of sufficient reason generates intolerable suffering. A multidimensional conception of the thing-in-itself provides less reason for denying the Will, since it introduces potentially uncountable and inscrutable dimensions that minimize the Will's metaphysical importance."

I may be permitted to add a third difficulty generated by the multidimensional view of the *Ding-an-sich*. It concerns Schopenhauer's (1974b: 3) understanding of the relation between science and philosophy. It will be recalled that according to Schopenhauer (1889b: 219) scientists utilise many inexplicable terms such as "energy", "force", "dark matter", "singularity", "dark energy" and so on, which are *qualitates occulta* – "occult qualities, necessary but scientifically inexplicable elements of scientific explanations of the world" (Cartwright, 2005: 52). The Will – unlike the vacuous terms "energy", "force", "dark matter", etc. – is said by Schopenhauer (1889b: 376; 1969a: 110-112) to be truly known (albeit in a unique way); consequently, if such phenomena and all other inscrutable natural forces were to be comprehended as a form of volition then, it follows, they would not be as mysterious as they now appear. The Schopenhauerian philosophy, and in particular the identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich*, would become the root from which all the branches of science emanate.[269] Now, if I were to play the *advocatus diaboli*[270] I might remark that a multidimensional view of the *Ding-*

[268] The reader should refer to the appendix for a detailed consideration of this matter. Therein I argue that the impetus of the ascetic lifestyle is not individual liberation from suffering, but universal compassion for the suffering of others.

[269] As Schopenhauer (1889b: 246) states in his work *Über den Willen in der Natur*: "Whenever explanation of the physical comes to an end, it is met by the metaphysical; and wherever this last is accessible to immediate knowledge, the result will be, as here, the Will".

[270] "The Devil's advocate".

an-sich leads to the conclusion that although the inner nature of the world manifests itself *in me* as the Will I cannot arbitrarily assume that that same aspect of the *Ding-an-sich* manifests itself in other animate or inanimate objects. As a result thereof, I would be obliged to accept the inscrutability of certain phenomena such as dark matter, energy and so on; which is, of course, contrary to Schopenhauer's (1974b: 3) ultimate intention.

Now although we have seen that the multidimensional interpretation of the *Ding-an-sich* was initially postulated by Schopenhauer (1969b: 196-198) as a solution to the difficulty of the Will's temporality, the three aforementioned considerations pertaining specifically to the multidimensionality of the *Ding-an-sich* caution us against hastily adopting it; for as we have seen, the multidimensional view inadvertently decimates the foundations upon which the Schopenhauerian philosophy is constructed. That may seem congenial to our present purposes, for I am intentionally trying to illustrate that the Will cannot be taken as a sufficient explanation of the *Ding-an-sich*; thereby illustrating the untenability of Schopenhauer's theory of immortality. However, I must observe that if we were to adopt this multidimensional view it would become far more difficult – if not impossible – to disprove a slightly modified theory of athanasia, for it may be that although the Will is located within time, and hence cannot be identified with the world as it is in-itself, the other aspects of the *Ding-an-sich* may be impervious to the form of time and thus these inscrutable dimensions may indeed continue to exist *post mortem*. I observe that even if one were to adopt the multidimensional view it would not vitiate the view here propounded, for my exposition does not rule out the possibility of *something* surviving the destruction of the physical form; but it does offer compelling reasons for exempting the possibility of the conscious/cognitive/rational apparatus or the Will as possible candidates for immortality. It is not my intention to convince my readers one way or another; my sole intention in this section has been to illustrate that the Will is not impervious to time and hence it cannot be equated with the *Ding-an-sich*.

It should also be noted that Schopenhauer's (1969b: 197) argument, in an attempt to salvage the equation of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich*, that time is "the thinnest of veils" is unconvincing. Here we must observe that Schopenhauer portends that time does not have an extremely obscuring effect on disclosing the nature of the *Ding-an-sich*: just as a translucent object does not conceal the nature of an object behind it, so

too are we to consider time. However, we may enquire as to how Schopenhauer knows that time is a "thinner" veil than that of either space or causality. Furthermore, it does not follow that solely one veil, viz., that of time, is better than the threefold veil of time, space and causality, as Young (2005: 94) notes:

> "[…] it cannot in general be argued that the fewer the filters ('veils') through which one views something the closer one comes to experiencing it as it is in itself."

For all we know the form of time may have an *extremely* obscuring effect upon the nature of the *Ding-an-sich*, thus rendering it entirely different from the way it really is in-itself. Indeed, as one aspect of the principle of individuation we ought to suspect time to be a great obscurantist. Moreover, in the course of his discussion Schopenhauer (1969b: 196-197) does not offer a cogent defence for his claim that time is "the thinnest of veils", he appears to merely assert the notion in an attempt to preserve his claim that the Will is the *Ding-an-sich*, or at least "the nearest and clearest *phenomenon* of the thing-in-itself" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 197). As a consequence, the argument must be rejected as inadequate.

We have still to contend with one final issue pertaining to the multidimensionality of the *Ding-an-sich*, viz., the possibility of *knowing* it by way of mysticism. Schopenhauer (1969a: 410) maintains that mystic visionaries are capable of apprehending the ordinarily inscrutable aspects of the *Ding-an-sich*, although this knowledge remains incommunicable to others. It will be recalled that an attempt to communicate knowledge requires the use of words, which are inextricably bound to concepts. Hence the communication of knowledge necessarily subjects it to the *principium cognoscendi* (Schopenhauer, 1889a: 114). But we must enquire, as I did in the section on the Will considered as a concept, whether it makes any sense to speak of *knowledge* about the inscrutable aspects of the *Ding-an-sich* in the first place. The difficulty here can be elucidated by way of disclosing the logical fallacy inherent to the notion; in essence the following proposition is being postulated by Schopenhauer (1969a: 410): "one may possess knowledge of that which transcends knowledge". The claim is evidently self-refuting, for it makes no sense for one to speak of the acquisition of knowledge impervious to the principle of sufficient reason, when in fact the very concept of knowledge presupposes the principle of sufficient reason. Furthermore, we must

observe that all knowledge claims are subject to the correlativity thesis (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 15-16): to know something is essentially to render it an object for a subject. I illustrated that even knowledge of the Will is not impervious to this fundamental principle, for one comes to know the Will by way of particular volitional states which are, in essence, *objects* for a perceiving subject. Thus, I argue that absolutely any knowledge claim implicates the correlativity thesis, even mystical knowledge presupposes a known object and a perceiving knower. The oddity here is that although mystics claim to possess such "knowledge" (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 410) they cannot point to an object which grounds their claim. Schopenhauer (1969a: 410) attempts to evade this difficulty by claiming that "such a state cannot really be called knowledge"; but if this is so then the mystics must possess mere unfounded fantasies, which do not accord with ultimate reality. This certainly does not accord with Schopenhauer's (1969a: 410) intended argument.

However, we cannot accept the claim that mystical knowledge is impervious to the correlativity thesis and the principle of sufficient reason, for mysticism (and religion in general) are equally as bound to the forms of human knowledge as are science and philosophy. In other words, human knowledge is limited by the correlativity thesis and the principle of sufficient reason and because all forms of knowledge are dependent thereon none can transcend it. If, as I have argued, science has a limit to the knowledge it can impart, that does not necessarily leave a void to be filled by another – arguably inferior – form of knowledge acquisition, such as mysticism. We have seen that because all knowledge is ultimately derived from perception of the world any knowledge claim must ultimately correspond to some external (perceptible) object. Now the ecstatic visions of mystics and prophets must ultimately emanate from some external source, and if they do not correspond to publicly perceptible objects we must assume them to have originated from inner (psychological) perceptions, i.e. they are nothing more than hallucinatory phenomena. That a prophet is said to have conversed with some supernatural being does not really disclose some profound insights concerning the world as it is in-itself, it only reveals the absurd chaos of that individual's own inner psychological state. In my opinion, such individuals do not deserve the adulation of acolytes but the medical assistance of psychiatrists. So much then for the oxymoronic concept of "mystical knowledge".

Finally, I wish to turn to a proof of the Will's spatiality. Although Schopenhauer (1969b: 197) claims that the Will is impervious to the form of space a consideration of the matter proves his assertion to be false. For the Will is said by Schopenhauer (1969a: 102-103, 106; 108) to be akin to the body:

> "[…] the parts of the body must correspond completely to the chief demands and desires by which the Will manifests itself; *they must be the visible expression of these desires*.[271] Teeth, gullet, and intestinal canal are objectified hunger; the genitals are objectified sexual impulse; grasping hands and nimble feet correspond to the more indirect strivings of the Will which they represent."

In other words, the spatially extended body *is* identical to the Will as *Ding-an-sich*: every striving of the Will finds expression in a particular part of one's body (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 102-103). But if this is so, we must enquire if it makes any sense to speak of a non-corporeal volition: can, for instance, hunger exist without the stomach or sexual passion without the genitals? I doubt that such a thought is even truly conceivable. Indeed, are not these aforementioned desires as dependent upon bodily organs as consciousness is upon the brain? It will be recalled that Schopenhauer (1974b: 273) maintains that the destruction of the brain necessarily terminates consciousness; hence the latter cannot endure without the existence of the former. In like manner, it appears that hunger and sexual passion cannot persist without their necessary bodily organs. Indeed, I doubt that the notion of hunger devoid of a stomach or lust without copulatory organs makes any sense. Thus, the Will is intricately bound to the body and cannot really be thought to exist without it. For otherwise, we must absurdly conceive of the Will as *Ding-an-sich* as a plethora of numerous non-corporeal strivings which can only be actualised and thus comprehended by way of bodily organs! Rather, the Will must be conceived of as something which can only exist as a corporeal object, i.e. in connection with bodily organs. Now due to the fact that one's body is spatially extended it follows that the Will must likewise be subject to spatial properties. In other words, sexual passion and hunger are located in specific bodily organs which occupy a particular place - indeed, given that the entire body considered *in toto* is an objectification of the Will (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 108), it must of necessity occupy a particular place in space – *ergo* the Will *is* spatially located. I could, if I so desired, give

[271] The italicization of the concluding portion of the section is mine.

the exact spatial coordinates of the embodied Will, just as, in the case of time, I could measure the duration of a volition and date it (Edwards, 2009: 170).

We can conclude this significant section by observing that because the Will is both spatially and temporally situated it cannot be the *Ding-an-sich*; for the latter must necessarily be impervious to the influence of both time and space (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 417-418). Thus far, I have illustrated that the Will is subject to two forms of the principle of sufficient reason, viz., the *principium cognoscendi* and the *principium essendi*; I now turn to a consideration of the Will subject to the *principium fiendi*.

8.4. The Will as Subject to the *Principium Fiendi*

In his qualification of his identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich* Schopenhauer (1969b: 197) boldly declares that:

> "[…] the inner knowledge [by way of which the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is to be discovered] is free from two forms belonging to outer knowledge, the form of *space* and the form of *causality* which brings about all sense-perception."

However, I now wish to indicate that contrary to Schopenhauer's (1969b: 197) assertion, the Will is in fact subject to the causal principle. However, the argument by which I am able to illustrate this entails my detailed discussion on Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine; I therefore recommend that this section be read as an introduction to the appendix, wherein I illustrate that the metaphysical Will must be susceptible to transformation in order for Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine to make any sense.

In the section on the pessimistic *Weltanschauung* I argued that the only meaningful way in which Schopenhauer's (1969b: 605) assertion that it "would be better for us not to exist" can be construed is as a call to live the austere life of an ascetic. For the metaphysical Will is ordinarily indestructible and at the moment of an ordinary (i.e. non-ascetic) death the portion of the Will which once animated the organism will, by way of *palingenesis* (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 276), re-manifest itself in the phenomenal world, thereby continuing the tragedy of life. The only way in which the Will can be utterly abrogated is by way of asceticism (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 508).

Firstly, in connection with the abovementioned observation, it is significant to note that Schopenhauer (1969a: 272) considers his philosophy to be *immanent* as opposed to *transcendent*. Immanence refers to that which "keeps within the bounds of the possibility of experience", whereas transcendence refers to that which "going beyond all possibility of experience, endeavours to determine the nature of things as they are in themselves" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 279). As Cartwright (2005: 87) notes:

> "Schopenhauer argued that his philosophy is immanent in the Kantian sense, that is, it makes no claims about anything beyond the possibility of experience; it provides an explanation and interpretation of what is given in the experiences of the external world and in self-consciousness."

As such, it is erroneous to construe the Schopenhauerian soteriological doctrine as intimating that asceticism solely affects one's phenomenal volitions and not the metaphysical Will, as Robert Wicks (2008: 127-133) appears to do; for we then run the risk of rendering Schopenhauer's philosophy *transcendent* by unwittingly implying that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is divorced from the phenomenal world and consequently the former must necessarily exist above or beyond the latter. In contradistinction thereto, the immanence of the metaphysical Will necessarily portends that it is in fact susceptible to ascetic practices. This essentially portends that the metaphysical Will *is* subject to alteration, i.e. to the *principium fiendi*.

However, the way in which the *principium fiendi* interacts with the *Ding-an-sich* is slightly more complex. I discuss this matter in greater deal in the appendix, but for the sake of thoroughness I shall succinctly reiterate it here: it seems to me that the ascetic practices must be thought of as affecting an alteration in one's phenomenal volitions – which is experienced by the subject as an attenuation in the potency of a desire – and this must necessarily correspond to the metaphysical Will, i.e. a contraction therein is affected, for the former is a mere manifestation of the latter in time and space, and consequently an alteration in the one sphere will undoubtedly affect a change in the other. However, I must observe that in the appendix I am concerned that this maverick interpretation is liable to the criticism that it erroneously applies the causal law, which is supposed to be an *a priori* feature of the mind (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 436), to the mind-independent world of the *Ding-an-sich*. This criticism is entirely valid, but it neglects a serious possibility, viz., that causality (or a particular form thereof) might in

fact be mind-*independent*, in which case my interpretation would remain valid. Indeed, I have illustrated on numerous occasions throughout my exposition that an *objective* form of causality seems likely to exist because (i) without it one cannot easily explicate the existence of the experienceable objects found throughout the universe, i.e. objects appear to contain something within themselves which *cause* them to appear the way they do and (ii) the fact that one cannot easily determine the *vera causa* of phenomena portends that causality does not in fact emanate from the mind, but rather exists independently thereof.

Thus, in no way does the fact that causality applies to the world as it is in-itself vitiate my interpretation. Rather, I consider my view to be the correct explanation of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 382) soteriological doctrine, for it accords immaculately with his system *in toto*. But the most significant aspect of the present discussion is the fact that the metaphysical Will can be caused to contract by ascetic practices; for the fact that the *Ding-an-sich* can *change* intimates that it is in fact susceptible to the causal principle. Now this is of tremendous pertinence in so far as it will be recalled that one of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 275) arguments for immortality is that the Will is unchanging and thus, unlike phenomenal objects, it is said to be impervious to creation and destruction (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 275). My maverick interpretation of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine (cf. the appendix) jettisons this dogmatic notion and thus the metaphysical Will cannot, on my interpretation, be considered immutable and consequently, it cannot actually be considered immortal.

9. Conclusion

In spite of a certain consolatory appeal, I maintain that I have persuasively illustrated the untenability of Schopenhauer's theory of immortality. This was accomplished by way of a detailed critical examination of the two primary pillars upon which the theory is based, viz., Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3) radical idealism and his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100, et al.) identification of the *Ding-an-sich* with the Will. In order to arrive at a definite conclusion regarding the veracity of these two notions it was necessary to consider the Schopenhauerian philosophy *in toto* because, as I emphasized in the introductory section, Schopenhauer is "an emphatically systematic thinker" (Higgins, 2003: 330), in which each part of his thought is held to be intricately interrelated to the others (Schopenhauer, 1969a: xii). As a consequence thereof, I structured my exposition along Schopenhauer's (1969a: 1, 93 and 269) presentation of the topics in his *opus maximum*, commencing with a discussion on his radical, "physiological" (McGill, 1971: 144), idealism, which takes its rise from notions first proposed, according to Schopenhauer (1969a: 3), by Descartes, but fully enunciated by George Berkeley. I then turned to a consideration of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) attempted identification of the way the world is in-itself, i.e. to *positively* characterise the *Ding-an-sich* – an undertaking utterly inadmissible on Kantian terms – which naturally led into discussions on suffering, Schopenhauer's notorious pessimism, suicide and ultimately death and immortality, the last of which constitutes the principal theme of my exposition.

I illustrated that for Schopenhauer (1969b: 501) an individual is immortal only in so far as one is metaphysically Will, which is said to be both atemporal and acausal; this, in fact, is the essence of Schopenhauer's argument in favour of athanasia. I consequently subjected the theory to a thorough scrutiny in the second primary section of the disquisition and I believe myself to have unequivocally illustrated, by way of numerous cogent arguments, that the Will is in fact located in both time and space and is further susceptible to the influence of the causal law; as such I conclude that the Will cannot be indestructible and it therefore cannot be considered as the immortal entity within a creature. Furthermore, and as a supplement to the aforementioned argument, I have attempted to illustrate that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3) particular form of radical idealism is just as untenable as his claim that the metaphysical Will is aspatial,

atemporal and acausal – thereby decimating the second pillar upon which his theory of athanasia is based. In particular, I have argued that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 3) radical idealism is unsound in so far as he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273) regards consciousness as dependent upon the physical brain[272] but likewise attempts to propound an evolutionary theory (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 152-154). It seems to me that the sagacious course, as I discussed in detail herein, is to reject and jettison radical idealism in favour of an evolutionary theory, but both positions cannot be avowed simultaneously on Schopenhauer's terms.

Having arrived at these conclusions it is evident that, in spite of its beauty and consolatory power, it is impossible to defend and avow the Schopenhauerian theory of athanasia upon an *orthodox interpretation* of the *Ding-an-sich*. Here it must be recalled that I refer to the orthodox interpretation as the view which unequivocally equates the Will with the *Ding-an-sich* (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100); whereas the maverick view is that which considers the Will to be only one facet – indeed, the only form "we know most immediately" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 198) – of the way the world may be in-itself (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 196-198). As a consequence thereof, in rejecting Schopenhauer's theory and in concurring with him (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 273) regarding the status of the mind, i.e. that it is akin to the physical, mortal brain, I do not wish to give the impression that I utterly reject the concept of athanasia within his philosophical system. On the contrary, I wish to observe, once again, that in no way does my critical exposition rule out the possibility of *something* surviving the demise of the physical form within the Schopenhauerian philosophy (i.e. upon a maverick interpretation of the *Ding-an-sich*). For it will be remembered that Schopenhauer's (1969b: 196-198) qualification of his central thesis, viz., that the Will is the *Ding-an-sich*, intimates that there are inscrutable aspects to the way the world is in-itself. As such, when an individual perishes it is possible that something ineffable persists (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969b: 494), but I believe that my critical exposition precludes the possibility of that something being the so-called metaphysical Will, as Schopenhauer

[272] It is for this reason that McGill (1971: 144) correctly refers to Schopenhauer's idealism as "physiological".

(1974b: 270, et al.) attempts to argue.[273] However, one should not consider the inability to resolve the question of whether or not something survives the demise of the physical form as indicative of the ineptitude of the discipline or the Schopenhauerian philosophy, for as Bertrand Russell (1999: 8) remarks:

> "Philosophy, if it cannot answer so many questions as we could wish, has at least the power of asking questions which increase the interest of the world, and show the strangeness and wonder lying just below the surface even in the commonest things of daily life."

Therefore, even though the mystery of athanasia has not – and indeed may never – be solved, philosophy can, by way of its method, question death, which thereby generates profound consolations regarding the inevitability thereof. This is undoubtedly true of the Schopenhauerian philosophy. In that sense, it accords with the Socratic view (cited by Schopenhauer, 1969b: 463), viz., that, as Michel de Montaigne (1946a: 103) expresses it, "*to think as a philosopher is to learn to die*".

[273] Furthermore, if one concurs with Schopenhauer's (1974b: 273) claim that consciousness is entirely dependent on the physical brain, then it ought to be evident that whatever survives the demise of the physical form cannot be conscious.

Appendix to the Will as Subject to the *Principium Fiendi*

In this appendix, which is an emendation of my Master's dissertation[274] which I completed at the University of the Witwatersrand, I seek to illustrate the alterability of the Will as *Ding-an-sich* by way of a novel interpretation of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine. Due to the fact that the appendix constitutes an autonomous consideration on a distinct aspect of Schopenhauer's philosophy, I wished neither to vitiate my thesis nor this particular self-contained discussion by attempting to incorporate it into the main body of my work; hence I have included it as an addendum. But its appropriate position is in fact in the second, critical part of the dissertation wherein I attempt to refute Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) claim for the identification of the Will with the *Ding-an-sich* by indicating that it is susceptible to the *principium fiendi*.[275]

I may be permitted to take this opportunity to outline the central argument to be found in the following appendix and to offer a more detailed account of its relation to my work as a whole. Although it may, upon an initial reading, appear convoluted and technical, the argument is in fact rather simple. In short, I take the abrogation of the Will to be central to Schopenhauer's ascetic doctrine. However, this aspirational goal is not as easily achieved as it may at first appear and I discuss at length the many problems and attempted solutions pertaining thereto. Schopenhauer's (1969b: 382) claim that the inner essence of the ascetic saint dissolves at the moment of death is peculiar in so far as every appearance *presupposes* the Will; consequently, "as long as the ascetic is alive, the inner nature is in him, however weak it may be, and at death it should, it seems, be 're-absorbed' into the one metaphysical Will" (Copleston, 1947:178). To this end I argue that Schopenhauer ought to have concluded his *magnum opus* by avowing suicide by starvation as the only genuine path to salvation; for in this way I argue that the ascetic practices occasion death by abrogating the portion of Will which once animated the ascetic saint's body, thereby reducing the amount of suffering

[274] "*On the Abrogation of the Schopenhauerian Ascetic Saint's Essential Being by the Practice of Sallekhana*", completed in 2011.

[275] The principle of sufficient reason of becoming, i.e. the law of causality.

in the world by preventing a portion of the Will as *Ding-an-sich* from re-manifesting itself in the world of appearances by way of *palingenesis* (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 276).

I vindicate the incorporation of this section in its current form for two primary reasons. The first of which is rather trivial, but I maintain that it shall (partly) indicate the way in which I arrived at an interest in Schopenhauer's concepts of death and immortality. Secondly, and more significantly, my exploration of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine can be read and studied independently of the primary topic of the dissertation; but my discussion herein leads to the pertinent conclusion that the Will as *Ding-an-sich*, contrary to what Schopenhauer (1969b: 470-473) claims, is not insusceptible to alteration. This is significant in so far as one of the primary arguments for immortality in Schopenhauer's (1969a: 275) philosophy is the notion that the Will in-itself is impervious to the *principium fiendi* and consequently to alteration; hence the Will, according to Schopenhauer's thesis, can neither be created nor destroyed. I reiterate, however, that due to the intricacy of the argument it seemed to me that I could not incorporate this discussion into the primary body of my thesis without vitiating it and the argument here propounded, and I therefore resolve to present it in its current form. Although I have attempted to avoid unnecessary repetition, the fact that this work is self-contained has made it necessary to repeat, albeit in far less detail, some of the notions already encountered and discussed in the main body of the dissertation, I beg my readers to excuse this necessary fault.

1.

Despite the ingeniousness of his system, the so-called "philosopher of pessimism" (Cartwright, 2005: 124) has long been accused of inconsistency.[276] My primary intention herein is to discuss and emend just one of these inconsistencies in particular,

[276] See, for example, Bertrand Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy* (1946) pages 785 and 787; Frederick Copleston's *Arthur Schopenhauer: Philosopher of Pessimism* (1947) page 190; David Cartwright's *Historical Dictionary of Schopenhauer's Philosophy* (2005) page xxx, and Patrick Gardiner's article on Schopenhauer in *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Volume VII (1967) page 331.

viz., the claim which Schopenhauer (1969a: 382) propounds in the fourth book of the first volume of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* concerning the death of the ascetic saint. Therein Schopenhauer (1969a: 382) states that when such a one dies "it is not merely the phenomenon, as in the case of others, that comes to an end with death, but the inner being itself […] is abolished […] for him who ends thus, the world has at the same time ended".[277]

This claim is problematical in itself, for as Frederick Copleston (1947: 178) notes, it is extremely difficult to understand how such an event can occur given the fact that, as Schopenhauer (1969a: 382) himself admits, "in the ascetic the inner nature exists only in a very weak degree"; consequently, "as long as the ascetic is alive, the inner nature is in him, however weak it may be, and at death it should, it seems, be 're-absorbed' into the one metaphysical Will".

But the notion of the inner essence dissolving at the moment of the ascetic's death is rendered utterly inconsistent by an explicit pronouncement made by Schopenhauer (1974b: 312) in his last major work published in 1851, viz., that the so-called "denial of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*] does not in any way assert the annihilation of a substance". Now if the ascetic practices do not affect a transcendental change, by which I mean cause some alteration in the metaphysical Will, then the notion that the inner nature of the saint is abrogated at the moment of his death is, to be frank, utterly impossible. This, then, is the inconsistency which shall concern me herein.

However, before I commence my discussion in earnest I wish to indicate that I do not intend to oppose Schopenhauer's (1969a: 382) claim that the Will of the saint dissolves at the moment of his death, for this concept will be utilised in my explanation as to how asceticism paradoxically reduces suffering in the world.[278] But how that dissolution of

[277] It is necessary to mention that I intend no sexism by referring to the saint as a male. My motive for doing so is simply aesthetic, as Schopenhauer did so in his writings and I wish to keep with his style herein. Indeed, as Julian Young (2005:189) correctly notes: "many of Schopenhauer's examples of sainthood are women".

[278] Indeed, I wish to note that any interpretation which follows Schopenhauer's (1974b: 312) pronouncement that ascetic practices do not lead to the "annihilation of a substance" is liable to serious criticism. In particular, such interpretations appear to reduce Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine to egoism, by attempting to libertate the *individual* ascetic from

the Will occurs is, in my estimation, not at all conspicuous; accordingly, if I am to retain that notion, I must illustrate as persuasively as possible how that termination occurs – for as it stands the doctrine is evidently incomplete and in desperate need of a correction. Fortunately, I have found that I need not stray too far afield in search of a solution, for one, as I see it, is already contained within the Schopenhauerian philosophy itself: it is, namely, the distinction between an ordinary death and one occasioned by the most extreme form of asceticism, viz., suicide by starvation (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 400-401). I shall expound upon these themes in due course.

I may be permitted to state that I am confident that my interpretation of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine shall be of great interest and benefit to Schopenhauerian scholars. It is not an outlandish interpretation in so far as it utilises concepts originally propounded by Schopenhauer (1969a: 400-401) himself: indeed, its novelty resides solely in the way in which I have repositioned and presented certain Schopenhauerian concepts. Consequently, my interpretation is merely a reformulation of Schopenhauer's philosophy and it differs from it solely in structure and not in content. Indeed, I console myself by noting that progress in intellectual matters is often achieved through dissention, for as Schopenhauer (2010a: 112) explains:

> "Even when [a great work] stems from [one of the greatest intellects of all time], a newly created theory can hardly, without a miracle, already be so perfect at its very genesis that nothing is left for the successors to add, or to correct […] 'Never to err and always to hit the mark is the business of the gods: it is not granted to mortals to escape their fate'.
>
> [Consequently], it is incumbent on us to acknowledge what has been accomplished, to accept it gratefully and with a clear mind, and then to develop it to the best of our ability to the greatest possible perfection."

It is in this spirit that I commit my thoughts on this particular topic to paper.

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suffering. My interpretation, on the contrary, argues that the ascetic exacerbates his suffering in order to prevent it in others; consequently it must be considered an extreme form of altruism. I will elaborate on these points in the course of my discussion.

2.

I shall assume that readers have already read the section on Schopenhauer's pessimism and are consequently aware of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 146-147) claim that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is the provenience of suffering. However, I wish to make an observation concerning this latter notion which, to my surprise and disappointment, is often absent in the secondary English literature on the Schopenhauerian philosophy.

To Schopenhauer's (1969a: 146-147, et al.) lamentable characterisation of the world as a place of incessant suffering I must add one other fact which, in my estimation, makes this view almost unbearable. Not only will one suffer in this life, but also in innumerable others, for according to Schopenhauer (1974b: 276) the provenience of suffering will be re-manifested through the process of *palingenesis*.[279] This thought, if it were to be considered veracious, would, it seems to me, induce even a confirmed optimist to become an ascetic. For imagine being born again and again, only in order to suffer again and again *ad nauseam* – "would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse" (Nietzsche, 1974: 273) such a thought? I doubt that many individuals wise to the bitter taste of tears in one life would be able to endure such a notion. This is an exceedingly significant point as it relates to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 372) concept of the enlightened consciousness which surmounts the illusion of individuality:[280] thus, the pain and torment of those as yet unborn creatures must be considered as significant

[279] It will be recalled that Schopenhauer (1974: 276) defines *palingenesis* as "[…] the disintegration and new formation of the individual, since *Will* alone persists and, assuming the shape of a new being, receives a new intellect." The notion is to be distinguished from *metempsychosis* which is "the transition of the entire so-called soul into another body" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 276). Cf. the section on death herein, wherein I first present and discuss these significant notions.

[280] The most succinct explication of the enlightened consciousness I am here referring to is given by Schopenhauer (1969a: 372) thus: "[t]he *principium individuationis*, the form of the phenomenon, no longer holds him so firmly in its grasp, but the suffering he sees in others touches him almost as closely as his own".

as one's own. In due course I shall explicate how in the case of the saint this sentiment of compassion reaches its zenith.

Nonetheless, in his *magnum opus* Schopenhauer (1969a: 392) suggests that it is the personal experience of active suffering and *ennui* which illuminate the human mind to the utter futility of all existence, culminating, Schopenhauer (1969a: 392) hopes, in the ascetic lifestyle. This austere style of living is, as Robert Wicks (2008: 127) observes, "often associated with monks and monasteries, [it] focuses on self-sacrifice, stillness, renunciation, self-knowledge, self-purification, self-imposed poverty, and deep meditation".

Now, it is the ascetic solution to the problem of suffering which most have found to be the most disagreeable aspect of the Schopenhauerian philosophy. For instance, the famous psychologist C. G. Jung (1989: 69) remarks that "Schopenhauer's sombre picture of the world had [his] undivided approval, but not [the philosopher's] solution of the problem". Indeed, the notion that the exacerbation of suffering shall somehow cause a reduction thereof seems to be contradictory.

There may be numerous reasons for individuals rejecting Schopenhauer's (1969a: 385-386) solution to the problem of suffering, but it seems to me that the controversial identification of the Will with the Kantian *Ding-an-sich* (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100) has caused many intellectuals, perhaps unwittingly, to reject the ascetic aspect of Schopenhauer's philosophy.[281] But in so doing a great injustice has been committed because the metaphysical concept of the Will (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 100), the ubiquity of suffering (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 310), Schopenhauer's (1969a: 380, 396) notorious pessimism, and salvation (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 379) are all inextricably bound. Thus,

[281] For instance, C. G. Jung (1989: 70) states that after he had read Kant's *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft* he believed that he had "discovered the fundamental flaw […] in Schopenhauer's system. [Schopenhauer] had committed the deadly sin of hypostatizing a metaphysical assertion, and of endowing a mere noumenon, a *Ding-an-sich*, with special qualities". I conjecture that Jung (1989: 69) rejects Schopenhauer's (1969a: 391-392) ascetic solution to the predicament of suffering because, by the time he entertained that section, he had already rejected the notion of the Will as the *Ding-an-sich*. In contrast, I maintain that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 391-392) ascetic solution to the problem of suffering is inseparably connected to his metaphysical concept of Will.

I consider myself vindicated in stating that the Schopenhauerian notion of salvation through asceticism will invariably seem peculiar to one who rejects *ab ovo* the metaphysical framework upon which it is based. But therein lies the error: one should not discount aspects of a systematic philosophy prior to considering it in its entirety, "for we cannot take away a pillar without endangering the rest of the structure" (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 369).[282]

However, that is not to suggest that the Schopenhauerian (1969a: 391-392) concept of salvation through asceticism is comprehended with ease if one uncritically accepts every word the great philosopher utters, for one may still find the last part of his *opus maximum* perplexing – for, I reiterate, how can an exacerbation of suffering cause a reduction thereof? It is my opinion that the baffling notion of asceticism is best comprehended by way of Schopenhauer's (1969a: 398-402) views on suicide; consequently, it is to that topic to which I now turn.

3.

What, in the first place, did Schopenhauer actually think of the phenomenon of suicide? As Dale Jacquette (2008: 302) and Frederick Copleston (1947: 91) note, it would appear, given his bleak view of existence (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 380, 396), that Schopenhauer has positioned himself for an enthusiastic defence of self-destruction.

Life, according to Schopenhauer (1974b: 292-293, et al.), is an unrelenting struggle which ultimately concludes in personal annihilation; thus why, we may justifiably ask, should one not hasten the inevitable? Let us, therefore, commence this topic by observing that if consciousness is a requirement in the production of suffering, i.e. one needs to be cognizant of some or other deprivation, and if this consciousness is

[282] I remind readers that, as Kathleen M. Higgins (2003: 330) notes in her article on Schopenhauer in Volume VI of the *Routledge History of Philosophy*, entitled *The Age of German Idealism*: "[…] Schopenhauer is an emphatically systematic thinker. In claiming that his philosophy is an 'organic' whole, composed of elements that stand or fall together, Schopenhauer invites the reader who rejects a part of it to reject the theory *in toto*".

expunged in death – as Schopenhauer (1974b: 273-274) himself states – then why not commit suicide? Surely death presents itself as the final escape from the torments and miseries of life?

However, for Schopenhauer (1974b: 309), ordinary suicide is a mistake[283] because "[it] is opposed to the attainment of the highest moral goal since it substitutes for the real salvation from this world of woe and misery one that is merely apparent". Now in order to fully comprehend Schopenhauer's meaning here it is necessary to acquaint oneself with his moral philosophy which has much in common with the non-Mohammedan Indian religions. It is also necessary to mention (as was previously alluded to) that Schopenhauer (1969a: 379) is not concerned with *individual* misery, and, by implication, *individual* deliverance. Were it the case that Schopenhauer had written about *individual*, i.e. personal, suffering and salvation then it seems obvious to me that he would have encouraged ordinary suicide because, as I mentioned, the consciousness which assists in producing suffering by alerting a sentient creature to an unfulfilled desire is expunged in death.

Schopenhauer's (1969a: 378-379) ideal human being is the ascetic saint who penetrates so profoundly into the inner essence of the world that

> "[…] he no longer makes the egoistical distinction between himself and the person of others, but takes as much interest in the sufferings of other individuals as in his own, and thus is not only benevolent and charitable in the highest degree, but even ready to sacrifice his own individuality whenever several others can be saved thereby, then it follows automatically that such a man, recognising in all beings his own true and innermost self, must also regard the endless sufferings of all that lives as his own, and thus take upon himself the pain of the whole world."

It may thus be said of such an individual that, "like Buddha, [he] cannot be completely happy so long as any living thing is suffering" (Russell, 1946: 799). This is due to the fact that the ascetic saint apprehends the metaphysical unity of all creatures; as a result of which he experiences every misfortune as though it were his own (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 379) – indeed he even realises that the Will in him shall re-manifest itself

[283] Although he (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 306-307) emphatically insists that it is not a crime.

through *palingenesis* after his death, thus continuing the senseless tragedy known as life. In contrast, an individual entangled in the "veil of Maya", i.e. "the *principium individuationis*, and […] the remaining forms of the principle of sufficient reason" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 352) is ignorant because:

> "[i]n this form of his limited knowledge he sees not the inner nature of things, which is one, but its phenomena as separated, detached, innumerable, very different, and indeed opposed." (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 352).

This is the illusion, the so-called "veil of Maya" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 378) which only the mendicant, truly and in actuality, surmounts. Now if we consider the compassionate ascetic saint – one who troubles himself over the innumerable tragedies which abound everywhere in the world (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 379) – to be the ideal of this pessimistic *Weltanschauung*, then it follows that the ultimate intention of the Schopenhauerian philosophy must be to reduce *universal* suffering. It is only if we remain ignorant of this fact that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 398) proscription of ordinary suicide may appear peculiar to us. Now with this notion firmly in mind let us turn to the matter of suicide in earnest.

Schopenhauer (1969a: 398) claims that ordinary suicide is altogether different from asceticism and he makes the odd remark that far from being a denial of the *Wille-zum-Leben*, ordinary suicide is actually "a strong affirmation" of the Will (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 398). The ordinary suicide, according to Schopenhauer (1969a: 399), does not deny the essence of life (i.e. the Will) but only the circumstances under which he presently finds himself, i.e. the ordinary suicide rejects the suffering of life but not the *Wille-zum-Leben* itself, which is, as we know, the provenience of suffering. As Schopenhauer (1969a: 398) states:

> "[Ordinary] suicide, the arbitrary doing away with the individual phenomenon, differs most widely from the denial of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*], which is the only act of its freedom to appear in the phenomenon, and hence, as Asmus calls it, the transcendental change […] Far from being denial of the Will, [ordinary] suicide is a phenomenon of the Will's strong affirmation. For denial has its essential nature in the fact that the pleasures of life, not its sorrows, are shunned. The suicide wills life, and is dissatisfied merely with the conditions on which it has come to him. Therefore he gives up by no means the [*Wille-zum-Leben*], but merely life, since he destroys the individual phenomenon. He

> wills life, wills the unchecked existence and affirmation of the body; but the combination of circumstances does not allow of these, and the result for him is great suffering."

Therefore, because ordinary suicide is an assertion, as opposed to a denial, of the Will it is ignorant, as Frederick Copleston (1947: 91) notes, of Schopenhauer's metaphysics:

> "Individual consciousness is indeed destroyed [in the act of ordinary suicide], i.e. phenomenal existence, but man's inner nature, identical with Will, persists and can never be destroyed."

Consequently, ordinary suicide is an inept undertaking in so far as it can never extinguish that which is the real provenience of suffering, viz., the Will. Furthermore, it must be reiterated that this Will can re-manifest itself after the demise of the phenomenal form through the process of *palingenesis* (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 276), thus continuing the tragi-comedy known as life.

But what, if anything, can affect the noumenal Will? Frederick Copleston (1947: 177) argues that Schopenhauer's (1969a: 382) claim that ascetic practices can abrogate the Will of a mendicant is not "logically justified". I take Copleston to mean that Schopenhauer does not cogently explicate how such an event can occur by way of ascetic practices – Schopenhauer (1969a: 382) simply presents it as a miraculous fact – a "*deus ex machina*" in Copleston's (1947:178) words. Indeed, it is odd that the Will should somehow entirely dissolve at the moment of a saint's death, even though Schopenhauer (1969a: 382) maintains that a glimmer of that entity exists within the most austere ascetics. However, I shall not reject this problematical concept propounded by Schopenhauer (1969a: 382) as it is an essential aspect of his philosophy: without it the concept of salvation as presented in book four of volume one of *Die Welt* is vacuous. For if the saint's Will persists after death then he is in precisely the same position as the lustful plebeian: what, then, would be the point of exacerbating one's suffering?

As a consequence of these observations I shall attempt to follow Schopenhauer's (1969a: 390) notions by arguing in the subsequent sections that the only way of perennially liberating oneself – and consequently other sentient creatures – from the servitude of the Will is through the ascetic ideal –i.e. living the austere existence of an ascetic saint. However, in doing so I shall present a novel, and not uncontroversial,

interpretation of the way in which such a process, viz., the dissolution of the metaphysical Will, may occur.

4.

What is meant by the term asceticism is the "*deliberate* breaking of the Will by refusing the agreeable and looking for the disagreeable, the voluntarily chosen way of life of penance and self-chastisement, for the constant mortification of the Will" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 392).[284] "According to this body of opinion", as Michael Fox (1980, 163) correctly notes, "to surmount suffering, one should abandon the struggle for happiness and the eradication of misery, and paradoxically, embrace suffering […] By doing so, and by continually and deliberately exposing oneself to pain, humiliation and deprivation, one can achieve liberation from the endless cycle of desires". Consequently, the ascetic saint exacerbates his misery as much as he possibly can, not solely by denying his body of its desires but, beyond that, by inflicting torture upon himself as a flagellant (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 382) in order to extirpate his Will, thereby reducing the amount of suffering in the world.

At this point one may justifiably wonder how the exacerbation of personal agony can diminish universal suffering. I shall address this concern in the subsequent section, but before I offer the interpretation of asceticism I consider to be the most credible, I wish to consider three alternative explanations.

Throughout his discussion on asceticism Schopenhauer (1969a: 390, et al.) alludes to the possibility of the manifested Will being absolutely abrogated in an animate being by the ascetic practices he prescribes. For instance, of the individual who has resolved

[284] It is worth mentioning that asceticism should not be conceived of as a "will not to will", for Schopenhauer (1969a: 275) makes it quite clear that the *Wille-zum-Leben* wills life perpetually: "*was der Wille will immer das Leben ist"* ("what the Will wills is always life") (Cartwright, 2005: 187). The ascetic lifestyle is rather a battle between the liberated consciousness *against* its oppressive taskmaster (i.e. the Will).

to deny himself pleasures and intentionally seek out the disagreeable, Schopenhauer (1969a: 390) states:

> "Such a man who, after many bitter struggles with his own nature, has at last completely conquered, is then left only as pure knowing being, as undimmed mirror of the world. Nothing can distress or alarm him any more; nothing can any longer move him; for he has cut all the thousand threads of willing which hold us bound to the world, and which as craving, fear, envy, and anger drag us here and there in constant pain."

Sentences such as this seem to suggest that the austere practices of the ascetic saint cause him to live a more harmonious existence than the lustful plebeian by abrogating the Will in an absolute sense while he lives and breathes.[285] But Schopenhauer (1969a: 382) admits that the saintly state is not actually one of will-lessness but a "constant struggle" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 391) because:

> "He who has reached [the point of asceticism] still always feels, as a living body, as concrete phenomenon of Will, the natural tendency to every kind of willing; but he deliberately suppresses it, since he compels himself to refrain from doing all that he would like to do, and on the other hand to do all that he would not like to do, even if this has no further purpose than that of serving to mortify the Will."

Thus it is clear that a glimmer of the Will remains even in the body of the ascetic saint (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 382), and he must therefore constantly deny and frustrate his desires in order to persist with the ascetic lifestyle (cf. Young, 2005: 190). Consequently, we can confidently rule out this first possibility, viz., that the ascetic practices induce a state of will-lessness while alive, as being the impetus for Schopenhauer's prescription of asceticism.

A second explanation for Schopenhauer's avowal of the ascetic lifestyle may be inferred from his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 332) characterisation of "the Will's inner conflict with itself". As Copleston (1947: 161) explicates:

[285] In one of his colossal works on the Schopenhauerian philosophy Julian Young (2005) affirms this error, cf. pages 196-197.

> "The simplest assertion of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*] is the assertion of one's own body, which, in its inner nature, is the Will: it is objectified Will. But [the] assertion of one's own body very easily extends to the *denial* of the same Will expressed in another's body, either by destroying this latter or by compelling it to serve one's own Will, instead of allowing it to serve the other's Will, which is its natural function."

Thus some may not unjustifiably maintain that the impetus for the ascetic lifestyle in the Schopenhauerian philosophy is to prevent the saint from affirming his own Will and thereby inadvertently denying the Will in other creatures. To this I can only respond that, although asceticism reduces competition and conflict between creatures, I emphatically reject that it is the *sine qua non* of the Schopenhauerian doctrine which, it must be remembered, is an *idealistic* philosophy (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 3). Thus, I conclude with confidence that Schopenhauer could not have intended such a materialistic consequence – however beneficial the (unforeseen) consequences thereof might be. Moreover, if the intention of the ascetic lifestyle were merely to remove the inevitable competition between creatures Schopenhauer's (1969a: 382) prescription of intentionally seeking out the disagreeable would be rendered absurd, for the active exacerbation of suffering would not be explicable upon such a crude materialistic interpretation of the great philosopher's doctrine.

A third possibility is the notion that the ascetic practices are prescribed by Schopenhauer (1969a: 389-390) because they produce, paradoxically, a profound sense of jubilation for the saint.[286] It would be justifiable to assume that the ascetic saint would be somewhat of a morose and melancholic character given that he is perennially in a state of deprivation; but, oddly enough, Schopenhauer (1969a: 390) claims that the contrary is true of such individuals:

> "[…] The man in whom the denial of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*] has dawned, however poor, cheerless, and full of privation his state may be when looked at from outside, is full of inner cheerfulness and true heavenly peace."

[286]This understanding, which may also be referred to as the "beatific mystification interpretation", is the view I take Young (2005: 196-201) to affirm in his work on Schopenhauer.

It should be noted that the provenience of the contentment derived from ascetic practices is not the Will, but rather the intellect; thus such pleasure does not warrant negation, i.e. asceticism demands only the negation of pleasures derived from the Will and not "pleasures of the mind", as it were (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 391-392). Yet this intellectual contentment notwithstanding, the ascetic saint is by no means an egoistic hedonist: he does not seek to gain a state of personal jubilation through masochistic practices or otherwise – for as I mentioned, the ultimate *telos* of the saint is to reduce the amount of suffering which abounds everywhere in the world (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 379). I reiterate that if the Schopenhauerian saint were concerned solely with his own salvation then this interpretation might seem adequate; but the consciousness of the saint is painfully altruistic:

> "He recognises immediately, and without reasons or arguments, that the in-itself of his own phenomenon is also that of others, namely that [*Wille-zum-Leben*] which constitutes the inner nature of everything, and lives in all; in fact, he recognises that this extends even to the animals and to the whole of nature; he will therefore not cause suffering even to an animal." (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 372).

Now if the saint were concerned solely with his own well-being then this third option would present itself as a possible interpretation of Schopenhauer's prescription of asceticism; but due to the fact that it reeks of egoism I am obliged to reject it as a feasible interpretation. Indeed, it cannot be left unmentioned that if the pleasure derived from ascetic practices were a suitable solution to the predicament of suffering within Schopenhauer's philosophy then one would be compelled to affirm the acceptability, nay, the *necessity*, of ordinary suicide: for in both instances personal suffering is expunged; but, as one ought to know by now, the Schopenhauerian (1969a: 379) philosophy seeks ultimately to reduce universal suffering, as opposed to individual anguish.

5.

It seems to me that the only meaningful way in which the Schopenhauerian notion of asceticism can be interpreted is thus: a mortification of the phenomenal Will produces a "transcendental alteration", i.e. it affects the Will as *Ding-an-sich* in a desirable way. But before I commence an elaborate discussion on this fourth possibility, I believe it is necessary to discuss a potential cause for concern inherent to this interpretation, which might, I conjecture, prevent otherwise reasonable individuals from accepting the veracity thereof.

Some Schopenhauerian scholars such as Bryan Magee[287] and S. Jack Odell[288] have ventured to incorrectly equate the Will with the concept of a force or energy. For one to truly comprehend why such terms should not be utilised *in lieu* of the term Will it is necessary to mention Schopenhauer's (1974b: 3) understanding of the relation between science and philosophy.[289]

In Schopenhauer's (1974b: 3) view science requires metaphysics in order to complete its investigations (cf. Young, 2005: 56). [290] For instance, some physicists contend that

[287] "The term 'force', rejected by [Schopenhauer], would have been vastly preferable [to the world 'Will']. 'Energy' would have been better still" (Magee. 1997: 144).

[288] "[…] The reader may feel some uncertainty concerning exactly what Schopenhauer meant to refer to with the word 'Will'. I have considered all of the following: desire, drive, impulse, striving, and Magee's view that it us what physicists refer to as force or energy" (Odell, 2001: 54).

[289] I felt that I could not omit this section, which I already presented in the main body of my dissertation, without vitiating the presentation of my argument in this particular section (which, it must be remembered, is an independent consideration of Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine). I have therefore retained it and I beg my readers to excuse the repetition.

[290] This, in fact, is precisely one of the reasons Schopenhauer wrote *Über den Willen in der Natur*, as Professor David E. Cartwright (2005: 184) explains: "The somewhat clumsy subtitle of *On the Will in Nature*, 'A discussion of the Corroborations from the Empirical Sciences That the Author's Philosophy Has Received since Its First Appearance', may suggest that Schopenhauer was doing no more than confirming in new forms that which he had already established in his main work through different means. While Schopenhauer attempted to show

the universe was born *ex nihilo* and consequently that it had a point of commencement in time. Now human reason, as Kant (A480-484, B508-512) so admirably informs us in his *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, incessantly seeks out the unconditioned, i.e. the *causa prima* – but the realm beyond the empirical world is inaccessible to a physical scientist and such a one is therefore obliged to admit that science has its limits: it can teeter on the edge of the abyss but it can never, by its very nature, enter into that realm. But where empirical investigation is halted precisely at that point metaphysics, according to Schopenhauer (1974b: 3), is summoned into action. This can be most conspicuously discerned in the fact that science constantly utilises terms which possess no correlative objects as such; therefore it is justifiable to ask: what is actually meant by the terms "force", "energy", etc.? As Schopenhauer (1889b: 219) states in *Über den Willen in der Natur*:

> "Physical science is wont to designate this unknown, inaccessible something, at which its investigations stop short and which is taken for granted in all its explanations, by such terms as physical force, vital force, formative principles, etc., etc., which in fact mean no more than x, y, z."

Thus it appears that without metaphysical concepts scientists would not be able to explicate certain phenomena in great detail; but these concepts, upon which the monumental achievements of science are founded, are themselves exceedingly mysterious. They are, as Schopenhauer (1969a: 80) states, *qualitates occultae*, i.e. "occult qualities, necessary but scientifically inexplicable elements of scientific explanations of the world" (Cartwright, 2005: 52). The veracity of Schopenhauer's view is corroborated by the fact that, to my knowledge at least, no scientist can actually

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how 'unprejudiced empiricists' articulated, from *a posteriori* sources, scientific theories that supported his thesis that what we recognise in ourselves as Will is that which is expressed in all natural phenomena, his argument goes deeper than this. He analysed the natural sciences to show how they lead to his metaphysics, and he argued that his metaphysics completes the scientific image of the world by providing an explanation of that which is presupposed and unexplainable by science. Consequently, he thought his metaphysics of the Will provides a comprehensive explanation of the totality of experiences". We could be forgiven, therefore, for thinking that Magee (1997: 144) never read this little work by Schopenhauer – or if he did, that he never fully understood it.

explicate what is meant by the terms "force" and "energy", their significance in scientific theories notwithstanding.

It will be recalled that in an earlier section I argued that the Will, according to Schopenhauer (1889b: 376), is not a *qualitas occulta*, i.e. an inexplicable X which one utilises to explicate certain phenomena. Hence, contrary to Magee's (1997: 144) suggestion one should avoid utilising the terms "force" and "energy" in place of the term Will. As Schopenhauer (1969a: 111) states:

> "[…] I should be misunderstood by anyone who thought that ultimately it was all the same whether we expressed this essence-in-itself of all phenomena by the word Will or by any other word. This would be the case if the thing-in-itself were something whose existence we merely *inferred*, and thus knew only indirectly and merely in the abstract. Then certainly we could call it what we liked: the name would stand merely as the symbol of an unknown quantity. But the word *Will*, which, like a magic word, is to reveal to us the innermost essence of everything in nature, by no means expresses an unknown quantity, something reached by inferences and syllogisms, but something known absolutely and immediately, and that so well that we know and understand what Will is better than anything else, be it what it may."

Schopenhauer (1889b: 376) reiterates this view when he states:

> "[…] It is fair to let me, as a serious man, only speak of things which I really know and only make use of words which I attach a quite definite meaning; since this alone can be communicated with security to others, and Vauvenargues is quite right in saying: '*la clarté est la bonne foi des philosophes*'.[291] Therefore, if I use the words 'Will, [Will-to-life]', this is no mere *ens rationis*, no hypostasis set up by me, nor is it a term of vague, uncertain meaning; on the contrary, I refer him, who asks what it is, to his own inner self, where he will find it entire, nay, in colossal dimensions, as a true *ens realissimum*. I have accordingly not explained the world out of the unknown, but rather out of that which is better known than anything, and known to us moreover in quite a different way from all the rest."

[291] "Clarity is the good faith of philosophers".

I am of the opinion that the error of equating the Will with a type of force or energy has led, unwittingly, to a miscomprehension of the Schopenhauerian concept of salvation through the practice of asceticism. In short, I conjecture that it has led many sincere Schopenhauerian scholars to believe that the three foregoing interpretations are potentially acceptable ways of construing the troublesome concept of Schopenhauerian soteriology. I intend to show that my interpretation – which I consider to be the most credible, although not entirely impervious to criticism[292] – is at variance with Magee's (1997: 144) understanding of the Will as a type of force or energy. To comprehend why this is so – and this ought to be retained at the forefront of one's consciousness while reading the subsequent sections – one need only reflect on the fact that scientists maintain that energy cannot, according to the Law of the Conservation of Energy, be created or destroyed (Wilson, 1965: 11). But it ought to be evident by now that the Will is not a type of energy and consequently it is erroneous to indefensibly apply a scientific doctrine to the concept of the Will.

What I am about to propound shall certainly seem outlandish to those who dogmatically retain the superfluous equation of the Will with energy. But I beg my readers to retain an open mind for my interpretation is grounded, quite firmly, in Schopenhauer's (1969a: 272, 400-401) thought; thus it need not be met with hostility or suspicion. In short, my postulation states that if the volitions one experiences are a manifestation of the metaphysical Will then an augmentation or reduction in the potency of the former should likewise correspond to an increase or decrease in the metaphysical realm.

Before I endeavour to elaborate upon my particular interpretation, I wish to remind my readers that Schopenhauer (1969a: 272) argues for the immanent nature of his philosophy; in other words, "[…] it makes no claims about anything beyond the possibility of experience; it provides an explanation and interpretation of what is given in the experiences of the external world and in self-consciousness" (Cartwright, 2005: 87). Now, if one were to maintain the erroneous view that asceticism solely affects one's phenomenal volitions and not the *Ding-an-sich*[293] then one risks rendering

[292] The primary criticism which may be levelled at my interpretation is in fact proof of the *Ding-an-sich* being subject to the causal principle. As will be seen, I cannot cogently refute this criticism and it may therefore be taken as proof of the Will's susceptibility to causality.

[293] As Robert Wicks (2008: 127-133) does in his work on Schopenhauer.

Schopenhauer's philosophy transcendent. In other words, by arguing that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is distinct from the phenomenal world one unwittingly implies that the former is divorced from the latter, and consequently it must exist above and beyond it. Now, if one accepts Schopenhauer's (1969a: 272) claim that his philosophy is immanent and, further, that asceticism is able to break the Will (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 382), then one cannot affirm that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* is impervious to change; for the former is merely a manifestation of the latter in time and space, and consequently an alteration in the one sphere will undoubtedly affect a change in the other.

Now according to my interpretation, the sole purpose of asceticism in the Schopenhauerian philosophy is to *affect a transcendental alteration in the metaphysical Will*, thereby reducing the amount of suffering in the world. To begin with I believe it is necessary to clarify what I intend by the phrase "the absolute dissolution of the Will": as I comprehend the concept each individual is a manifestation of the *Ding-an-sich*, or, expressed slightly differently, every individual possesses a fraction of the unified metaphysical Will; therefore, an individual can entirely abrogate his fraction of the *Ding-an-sich* without causing a dissolution of the greater entity therewith.[294] This is what I take the concept to mean. Now this, I maintain, is accomplished by way of ascetic practices, i.e. asceticism is able to cause a contraction in the metaphysical Will. In order for us to comprehend how one might affect a transcendental change we must turn our attention to the phenomenal realm, which is merely a manifestation of the *Ding-an-sich*; consequently, a reduction or augmentation in the potency of phenomenal volitions coincides with a decrease or increase in the metaphysical entity respectively.[295]

Let us take the example of an addiction in order to further elucidate the way in which a volition might be surmounted or augmented. An alcoholic, for instance, may develop a resistance to the effects of alcohol and consequently more copious amounts are required

[294] It is necessary to mention that the abrogation of one's portion of the Will cannot be accomplished while alive, for reasons previously discussed. In the subsequent sections I shall explicate how I think this process occurs.

[295] One ought to recall the fact that Schopenhauer (1969a: 272) emphatically maintained that his philosophy is "immanent, in the Kantian sense" (Cartwright: 2005: 127) and not transcendent. Consequently, my interpretation thus far is in irreproachable accordance with Schopenhauer's doctrines.

each time the substance is consumed in order for the addict to experience the desired effects. Now by this I mean, in the parlance of my interpretation, that one's phenomenal desires have been caused to augment. Conversely, once the alcoholic resolves to recover from his addiction by abstaining from liquor the process of minimisation occurs, i.e. his phenomenal desires attenuate. In other words, although it may initially be exceedingly difficult for the recovering alcoholic to refrain from consuming such substances, gradually the desire shall attenuate to such a level that it may become almost undetectable, i.e. the mortification of a desire diminishes the potency of the phenomenal Will by causing it to attenuate. Now, we have seen that Schopenhauer (1969a: 100, 1974b: 90) identified the *Ding-an-sich* with that which we call "Will" within our inmost being and I propound, in accordance with his (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 272) claims concerning the immanency of his philosophy, that the reduction or augmentation in the potency of a phenomenal volition corresponds to the Will as a metaphysical entity: thus the vanquishing of a desire affects a transcendental change in the metaphysical Will by causing it to contract.[296; 297]

6.

I readily admit to four possible criticisms of my conception; the first of which is explicitly stated by Schopenhauer (1974b: 312) in *Parerga und Paralipomena* when he writes:

> "[…] The *denial of the* [*Wille-zum-Leben*] does not in any way assert the annihilation of a substance, but the mere act of not-willing; that which hitherto *willed* no longer *wills*."

[296] Conversely, of course, if one's phenomenal desires are caused to augment this alteration corresponds to the metaphysical Will as well, i.e. it affects an *undesirable* transcendental change by causing the *Ding-an-sich* to expand.

[297] Furthermore, I observe in passing that Schopenhauer (1974b: 312) himself fleetingly acknowledges the relationship between the denial and the affirmation of the phenomenal Will and the contraction and expansion thereof in the metaphysical realm respectively.

This sentence evokes the notion that it is possible to abrogate the Will and remain alive; but as I mentioned such an undertaking seems impossible according to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 382, 391-392) doctrine, because the Will is that which produces every phenomenal object and consequently it remains present even in the most austere ascetics. Indeed, on Schopenhauer's (1969a: 411) terms, without the presence of the Will a phenomenal object could not possibly exist: no Will, no phenomenal appearance. So much then for the first criticism.

A far more serious criticism may be directed at the fact that it appears that a causal connection exists between the saint's ascetic practices and the *Ding-an-sich*, or the saint's phenomenal volitions and the metaphysical Will. It goes without saying that because the mind imposes the law of causality upon the sensory data received by the senses, thereby constructing reality, it cannot subsist in the metaphysical realm (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 435-437). Consequently, how is it possible for asceticism to affect a transcendental change if the metaphysical realm is impervious to causality? My response, in short, is as follows: asceticism does not *directly* cause an alteration in the *Ding-an-sich*, but it is, nonetheless, able to do so *indirectly*.[298]

An elaboration of this notion is necessary and consequently I shall attempt to explicate it as perspicuously and concisely as I possibly can. The ascetic practices affect a change in the saint's phenomenal volitions, which, in turn, correspond to the metaphysical Will as I have shown; causality subsists solely in this former realm, i.e. the phenomenal sphere, in which asceticism causes either an augmentation or a reduction in the potency of phenomenal volitions, but asceticism can never *directly* cause the metaphysical Will

[298] Here I am attempting to defend my interpretation from the criticism that it is erroneous owing to the fact that the Will is susceptible to the causal principle. However, I might equally have resolved the difficulty by acknowledging an *objective* form of causality, thereby rejecting Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) claim that the metaphysical Will is impervious to the causal principle. In fact, one has to accept the metaphysical Will's alterability in order for Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine to make any sense. This proves that the metaphysical Will is not acausal; and it is superfluous whether that is due to an objective form of causality or to an indirect influence of the causal principle. Indeed, it is this observation which I take to illustrate that the Will is subject to the *principium fiendi*, and that it consequently cannot be regarded as unchanging and therefore immortal.

to contract or augment. Therefore, there exists no direct causal connection whatsoever between the ascetic practices and the *Ding-an-sich* and yet despite this, an alteration still occurs owing to the fact that the phenomenal volitions are equivalent to the metaphysical Will.

But it might enter into the minds of some precocious readers that a causal connection exists between the saint's phenomenal volitions and the metaphysical Will. Here, too, no such relation exists for one's phenomenal desires are equivalent to the metaphysical Will – "both are immediately one and the same thing, only perceived in a double aspect" (1889a: 93), hence the contraction, for instance, of a phenomenal desire does *not cause*, in the sense in which we are speaking, the *Ding-an-sich* to contract because that volition is the metaphysical Will expressed as a phenomenon.[299]

Another potentially damaging criticism may be directed at my notion of the Will as a fractionalised entity. Schopenhauer (1969a: 128-129) explicitly states that because the Will is not located within the *principium individuationis* it is unified, and thus:

> "[…] if, *per impossible*, a single being, even the most insignificant, were entirely annihilated, the whole world would inevitably be destroyed with it."

Hence one may tentatively reject my interpretation for affirming the fractionality of the Will. However, I may be permitted to point out that the Will one discovers through introspection is not atemporal as Schopenhauer (1969a: 112-113) had initially claimed: our volitional strivings "can be dated and their duration can be measured" (Edwards, 2009: 170).[300] This indicates that the Will cannot be a unity in the sense Schopenhauer (1969a: 113) speaks: the temporality of the Will betokens its fractionality. Thus, it is erroneous for Schopenhauer (1969a: 128-129) to maintain that the abrogation of the

[299] I admit that this argument is highly contentious, but it was necessary to attempt a solution of such a pertinent criticism of my interpretation. A far more credible argument is the so-called "neglected alternative" which postulates an objective form of causality; I refer readers to those sections (viz., 3.4 and 7.8) herein which cogently argue for this view, I shall therefore not reiterate those arguments here.

[300] Further thereto, it will be recalled that I argued that the Will is also subject to the form of space, owing to its inseparability from the bodily parts it is said to create. Such arguments definitively rule out the possibility of the metaphysical Will's unity.

Will in one individual would entail the annihilation of the universe *in toto*. In contradistinction to Schopenhauer (1969a: 112-113), I affirm that the Will is fractionalised to the extent that a portion thereof exists in every phenomenal object, thus the abrogation of the Will in one individual cannot destroy that entity *in toto*, it merely causes it to contract (which is empirically experienced as an attenuation in one's phenomenal volitions).

The fourth potential criticism I wish to discuss may be directed at the jargon with which I am compelled to describe the phenomenon of a transcendental change; for the concept of quantity, it is true, applies solely to the phenomenal world. Such are the limitations of language which I am obliged to accept. As the founder of the *Schopenhauer-Gesellschaft*, Paul Deussen (1966: 66), observed:

> "It is the misfortune of metaphysics that it has to operate with concepts and words which are taken from the empirical order of nature and which can be applied only in a certain fresh interpretation to metaphysical matters."

Be that as it may, how the metaphysical Will actually contracts or expands is utterly unintelligible to our finite minds: phenomenally we comprehend the minimisation of the Will as a reduction in the potency of a desire, but in what manner this process occurs in the metaphysical realm is unbeknownst to us mortals. However, I reiterate that if, as Schopenhauer (1969a: 99-100) insists, one is able to discover through introspection that the Will is the *Ding-an-sich*, then it is not in the least outlandish to suppose that some alteration must occur in the metaphysical entity when one experiences an intensification or a reduction in the potency of a phenomenal desire.

7.

My notion that the surmounting of a desire causes a reduction in the potency thereof, which in turn corresponds to the Will as *Ding-an-sich*, illustrates that it is through asceticism that one ultimately reduces the amount of suffering in the world (cf. Schopenhauer, 1969a: 378-379). This is due to the fact that the Will, as a metaphysical

entity, has been reduced and consequently a particular portion of it cannot re-manifest itself into existence, continuing the senseless struggle that is known as life.

It will be remembered that the cessation of suffering cannot be a personal matter on Schopenhauer's (1969a: 378-379) account – for if it were ordinary suicide would be condonable: each individual has a responsibility to every other and consequently all those endowed with altruistic personalities should strive to minimise universal suffering (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 378-379). In striking contrast to this view stands the ordinary suicide, who is as Julian Young (2005: 195) states: "exceptionally self-obsessed; [an individual] who [has] become so isolated from the rest of the world that it seems to [him] that only [his] own pain matters, indeed that only [his] own pain exists". The ordinary suicide's egoistical action is an affirmation of the Will (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 398-399) which, according to my doctrine, causes its metaphysical form to augment. This is to be lamented because through *palingenesis* the Will, unbroken and resilient, can continue to wreak havoc upon the world, as Schopenhauer (1969b: 503) explains:

> "Every new-born being comes fresh and blithe into the new existence, and enjoys it as a gift; but nothing is or can be freely given. Its fresh existence is paid for by the old age and death of a worn-out and decrepit existence which has perished, but which contained the indestructible seed. Out of this seed the new existence arose; the two existences are *one* being."

Thus, the phenomenal form of the ordinary suicide might come to an end, but his inner essence – the Will – persists; consequently, through *palingenesis*, it is able to manifest and affirm itself anew, thereby continuing the tragedy known as life.

However, in contrast to the ordinary individual, Schopenhauer (1969a: 411-412) seems to intimate that the ascetic saint attains a state to which we should all ultimately strive and venerate, viz., a nothingness; as Fredrick Copleston (1947: 178) explains:

> "When death at length comes, [the ascetic saint] will welcome it as the longed-for deliverance, since, in his case, it is not merely the phenomenal individual which ceases with death, but the inner nature is also abolished. 'For him who thus ends, the world has also ended'."

But how does the Will miraculously dissolve when the ascetic saint perishes? Surely, as Schopenhauer (1969a: 382) himself admits,[301] the Will, debilitated as it may very well be, still exists within the saint and consequently when he dies a portion of his metaphysical Will remains intact. As Copleston (1947: 178) continues:

> "It is very difficult to see how this final and complete deliverance is not simply a *deus ex machina*, gratuitously asserted by Schopenhauer, even on his own premises. He says indeed that in the ascetic the inner nature exists only in a very weak degree, and this 'slight bond' is broken by death; but, as long as the ascetic is alive, the inner nature is in him, however weak it may be, and at death it should, it seems, be 're-absorbed' into the one metaphysical Will."

Thus our question now is: can the phenomenal form of the essential being be abrogated? Before I can earnestly attempt a resolution of this seemingly impossible undertaking, mention must be made of the fact that the Will as *Ding-an-sich* cannot be pierced or singed by an ordinary death. It is in this way that Schopenhauer (1974b: 270-271) attempts to console his thanatophobic audience by assuring them that *mors non finis*:[302]

> "How can we imagine, on seeing the *death* of a human being, that here a thing-in-itself becomes *nothing*? On the contrary, that only a phenomenon comes to an end in time, this form of all phenomena, without the thing-in-itself being thereby affected, is the immediate intuitive knowledge of everyone […] Whoever imagines that his existence is limited to his present life considers himself to be an animated nothing; for thirty years ago he was nothing and thirty years hence he will again be nothing."

The afterlife that Schopenhauer (1969b: 486) presents is not, of course, the type that many religious and spiritual people hope for, i.e. most individuals hope for an afterlife in which one's consciousness and individuality survive the demise of the physical body and continue to exist in a disembodied form. As Dale Jacquette (2008: 300) correctly observes: "that death is not total annihilation for Schopenhauer is true enough, yet death remains the total annihilation of the self, soul, or object in the sense of individual Will

[301] "He who has reached [the point of asceticism] still always feels, as living body, as concrete phenomenon of Will, the natural tendency to every kind of willing" (Schopenhauer, 1969b: 382).

[302] "Death is not the end".

or particular empirical personality". Now, despite this fact, many thanatophobic individuals might continue to lavish praise on Schopenhauer for this consolatory notion, but for the ascetic saint – he who has the blood of a non-Mohammedan Indian pulsing through his veins – this thought arouses great despair because the intention of the saint is to get at the heart of the matter (the Will), not merely to destroy a phantasmagoria (the appearance). But it is obviously erroneous for Schopenhauer (1969a: 382) to maintain that when the saint dies his metaphysical being miraculously dissolves therewith, because the Will is still present in the most fanatical ascetics (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 382) and, consequently, it ought at death, as Copleston (1947: 178) correctly notes, to "be re-absorbed" into the one metaphysical Will.

8.

It is now left for me to illustrate how this seemingly unattainable ideal, i.e. the total abrogation of one's phenomenal Will (or, rather, fraction of the metaphysical Will), is achieved. As I have shown it is unacceptable from a Schopenhauerian (1969a: 398) perspective to commit ordinary suicide because such an action is an affirmation of the Will; this, I argued, causes the metaphysical entity to augment – which can then re-manifest itself through *palingenesis* (Schopenhauer, 1974b: 276). In this way suffering is maintained. But there is one type of suicide for which Schopenhauer (1969a: 400-401) makes an exception, viz., a voluntary chosen death by starvation:

> "There appears to be a special kind of suicide, quite different from the ordinary, which has perhaps not yet been adequately verified. This is voluntary chosen death by starvation at the highest degree of asceticism. Its manifestation, however, has always been accompanied, and thus rendered vague and obscure, by much religious fanaticism and even superstition. Yet it seems that the complete denial of the Will can reach that degree where even the necessary will to maintain the vegetative life of the body, by the assimilation of nourishment, ceases to exist. This kind of suicide is so far from being the result of the [*Wille-zum-Leben*], that such a completely resigned ascetic ceases to live merely because he has completely ceased to will. No other death than that by starvation is here conceivable (unless it resulted from a special superstition),

> since the intention to cut short the agony would actually be a degree of affirmation of the Will."

It ought to be conspicuous that such a suicide is undoubtedly a denial, as opposed to an affirmation, of the *Wille-zum-Leben* (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 391-392) because the saint does not evade the suffering of life, which is now exacerbated by the ascetic practice of starvation. I contend that dying by "the most extreme form of asceticism" (Cartwright, 2005: 7) dissolves the phenomenal Will which once animated the saint; this, in turn, affects a transcendental change by causing the metaphysical Will to contract, thereby reducing the amount of suffering in the world.

Now this process, i.e. the abrogation of the Will, can never be empirically demonstrated or corroborated in so far as, from an external perspective, such a death appears identical to that of an ordinary one. The only means by which I am able to give proof, as it were, of my doctrine is through logic.

Previously I established that ascetic practices cause a reduction in the potency of phenomenal volitions; I argued further that if one adheres to Schopenhauer's (1969a: 100) concept of discovering the *Ding-an-sich* through introspection he shall come to the realisation that the reduction or augmentation in the potency of one's phenomenal desires corresponds to the metaphysical Will – consequently, a change in the former corresponds to an alteration in the latter. If asceticism has the ability to reduce the potency of a volition then it follows that "the most extreme form of asceticism" (Cartwright, 2005: 7), which induces death as a foreseen consequence, must possess the same ability. But in this case it is the death which is occasioned by the ascetic practice of starvation which is of profound significance and we must assume that such a death was caused, in contradistinction to an ordinary one, by the dissolution of a portion of the metaphysical Will which once animated the saint's body.

Following Schopenhauer's (1969a: 400-401) notions, I maintain that suicide by starvation is distinct from all other types of death and suicide in so far as it fundamentally alters the Will.[303] In other words, suicide by starvation occasions the

[303] It must not be thought that one can attain the same outcome by intentionally starving another creature to death. For in the act of withholding nourishment, one affirms one's own Will; thus, although the metaphysical Will in the starved creature would dissolve, the Will in oneself would

dissolution of the phenomenal form of the Will, and as a metaphysical entity it is caused to reduce in size. In contrast, when the ordinary suicide departs this *vallis lacrimarum*[304] he has unwittingly exacerbated its suffering and tears by affirming the Will – thus causing it to expand as a metaphysical entity. In both instances a *transcendental alteration* has occurred, but the former is to be commended while the latter ought to be rejected.

The individual who perishes by voluntary starvation is liberated from the perpetual cycle of *palingenesis*: at the moment of death the portion of the Will which once animated the saint's body is utterly expunged – the inner essence of such a one is no more, neither as a phenomenal nor as a metaphysical entity. The saint has finally become, in the parlance of Jainism, a *Siddha*[305] and he is now beyond pain and joy, illness and health, birth and death, for his portion of the Will can no longer be re-manifested into existence.[306] As Schopenhauer (1969b: 508) states:

> "[…] to die willingly, to die gladly, to die cheerfully, is the prerogative of the resigned, of him who gives up and denies the [*Wille-zum-Leben*]. For he alone wishes to die *actually* and not merely *apparently*, and consequently needs and desires no continuance of his person. He willingly gives up the existence that we know; what comes to him instead of it is in our eyes *nothing*, because our existence in reference to that one is *nothing*. The Buddhist faith calls that existence *Nirvana*, that is to say, extinction."

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be caused to augment, thereby nullifying any good obtained. A possible exception, and one which I doubt would ever occur owing to its absurdity, is that of an "altruistic" individual who starves all other creatures to death and then himself commits suicide by way of starvation.

[304] "Vale of tears".

[305] The word literally means "'one who has accomplished his goals.' A term for a soul that has attained liberation from the cycle of rebirth" (Wiley, 2004: 197).

[306] It is worth noting that this notion may be characterised in one of two ways: from the first standpoint the process may be described as a reduction in the amount of suffering in the world; conversely, from the second perspective, one may wish to characterise this phenomenon as the ascetic saint attaining a condition of total equanimity, one in which no pain or pleasure affects him. Dissimilar as both may appear they are in fact one and the same notion, and consequently I maintain that they can be utilised interchangeably.

I have still to observe one final criticism which may be levelled against my interpretation, viz., that the abrogation of the saint's portion of the Will might seem superfluous, especially when one takes into consideration the possibility of the Will being caused to expand by avaricious individuals. What is the point, one may justifiably ask, in the saint causing the Will to contract when a gluttonous individual may cause it to expand tenfold? Such a criticism is as absurd as asking a righteous individual why he donates to charity and seeks to assist his fellow suffers when his actions cannot possibly reduce the suffering of countless others who shall never benefit from his virtuous deeds. Such a one is not beguiled by idealistic fantasies – but he knows, and is consequently contented by the fact that, even if in a small way, he has contributed to the reduction of suffering in the world.

9.

In my estimation I have persuasively illustrated that the essential being of the saint can only be abrogated through a voluntary chosen death by starvation; in so doing I have demonstrated, contrary to what Schopenhauer (1969a: 400-401) maintains, that suicide by starvation is not merely condonable but ought to be considered the ultimate ideal of his pessimistic philosophy.

In propounding this interpretation I do not feign to know better than the great man that which he intended to say, but the inconsistency inherent in the notion that the Will somehow dissolves when the ascetic perishes by natural causes (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 382) is so palpable that no lover of wisdom could fail to notice it: for how can such an event occur if the Will exists, albeit "in a very weak degree" (Copleston, 1947: 178), in the most austere ascetic? In order to surmount this inconsistency it was necessary to consider the role of asceticism in detail: I thus concluded that the impetus for asceticism in the Schopenhauerian philosophy was neither to create a unique contentment for the ascetic nor to produce a state of will-lessness whilst alive but, rather, to affect a transcendental alteration. This, I argued, is attained in the following way: ascetic practices are able to weaken the potency of phenomenal volitions, and this reduction in the strength of a desire corresponds to the Will as *Ding-an-sich*.

By implication of this foregoing notion I was led to the logical conclusion that the most austere ascetic practice which occasions death does so because the portion of the Will which once animated the ascetic's body is expunged. In this case, the Will as *Ding-an-sich* has been caused to reduce – for want of a better word – in size; thus a portion of it will no longer be re-manifested into existence and, consequently, the world contains a little less suffering:

> "[…] with the free denial, the surrender, of the Will, all those phenomena also are now abolished. That constant pressure and effort, without aim and without rest, at all grades of objectivity in which and through which the world exists; the multifarious forms succeeding one another in gradation; the whole phenomenon of the Will; finally, the universal forms of this phenomenon, time and space, and also the last fundamental form of these, subject and object; all these are abolished with the Will. No Will: no [appearance], no world" (Schopenhauer, 1969a: 410-411).

Afterword

As a definitive conclusion to my exposition I would like to offer readers a final and succinct summary of the way in which my dissertation assumed its critical stance and the way in which I ultimately arrived at a refutation of Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia.

During the writing of my Master's thesis, which was primarily concerned with Schopenhauer's theory of suicide, I made the significant distinction between two types of death, viz., an ordinary form thereof and one occasioned by the most extreme form of asceticism, i.e. suicide by starvation. It occurred to me that in order for Schopenhauer's soteriological doctrine to make any sense it was necessary to assume the heretical notion of the metaphysical Will's destructibility; for if the Will is impervious to destruction then Schopenhauer's approbation and prescription of asceticism becomes either one of egoistical concern or utterly superfluous; both of which I find unacceptable. Indeed, the view that annihilation of the metaphysical Will is the genuine purpose of Schopenhauer's approval of asceticism has led me to a unique and, I believe, extremely valuable interpretation of his doctrine of salvation, which, to my knowledge, has hitherto never been proposed. The notion that the Will can, under extreme and exceptional circumstances dissolve, led me to the realisation that such an interpretation was at variance with Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia and that it may, in fact, be possible to argue that the Will is not indestructible and immortal as Schopenhauer claims. It was this particular observation which determined the critical nature of my study, for otherwise I might have been motivated, as indeed I initially was, to offer a defence of the theory. Of course, I am now doubtful that such an undertaking would have produced fruitful results, and I am glad that I rather approached the subject from the critical perspective that I have.

It ought to be evident to readers that Schopenhauer's doctrine of athanasia is based upon two central pillars, viz., the radical idealist position, i.e. that the real world we perceive exists, like a dream, solely within our minds, and his claim that the Will is a positive characterisation of the Kantian "thing-in-itself". I believe that I have cogently refuted both views in the course of my discussion, firstly, by illustrating, among other things, that the world "out there" must necessarily contribute to our perceptions thereof,

for often we are presented with disagreeable and harrowing phenomena which the mind would not willingly choose to portray to itself; and, secondly, by indicating that the Will is in fact a concept, a product of intellectual intuition and located within time and space and subject to the causal law, it cannot, in the last analysis, be regarded as indicative of the so-called "thing-in-itself", which is said to be mind-independent. As a consequence thereof, I regard my study as definitively refuting Schopenhauer's theory of immortality according to an *orthodox* interpretation thereof, i.e. one in which the Will is entirely identified with the thing-in-itself. Of course, it leaves open the possibility of an ineffable immortality upon a maverick interpretation of his philosophy, which regards the thing-in-itself as pluralistic. To my knowledge my study on this particular topic is the first to be conducted in the secondary English literature; it will therefore undoubtedly fill a lacuna in the work undertaken by academics and scholars on Schopenhauer's philosophy. Moreover, in the course of my discussion I have raised and critically engaged with numerous points in Schopenhauer's system, some of which have generated novel notions, which might – and hopefully will – also contribute to the growing secondary literature on Schopenhauer's philosophy. In this way I hope and believe that my work, and in particular my discussions on Schopenhauer's theory of athanasia and his views on asceticism and suicide, will be of great benefit to current and future scholars.

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